DC: The New Frontier

DARWYN COOKE
with DAVE STEWART

DC: THE NEW FRONTIER

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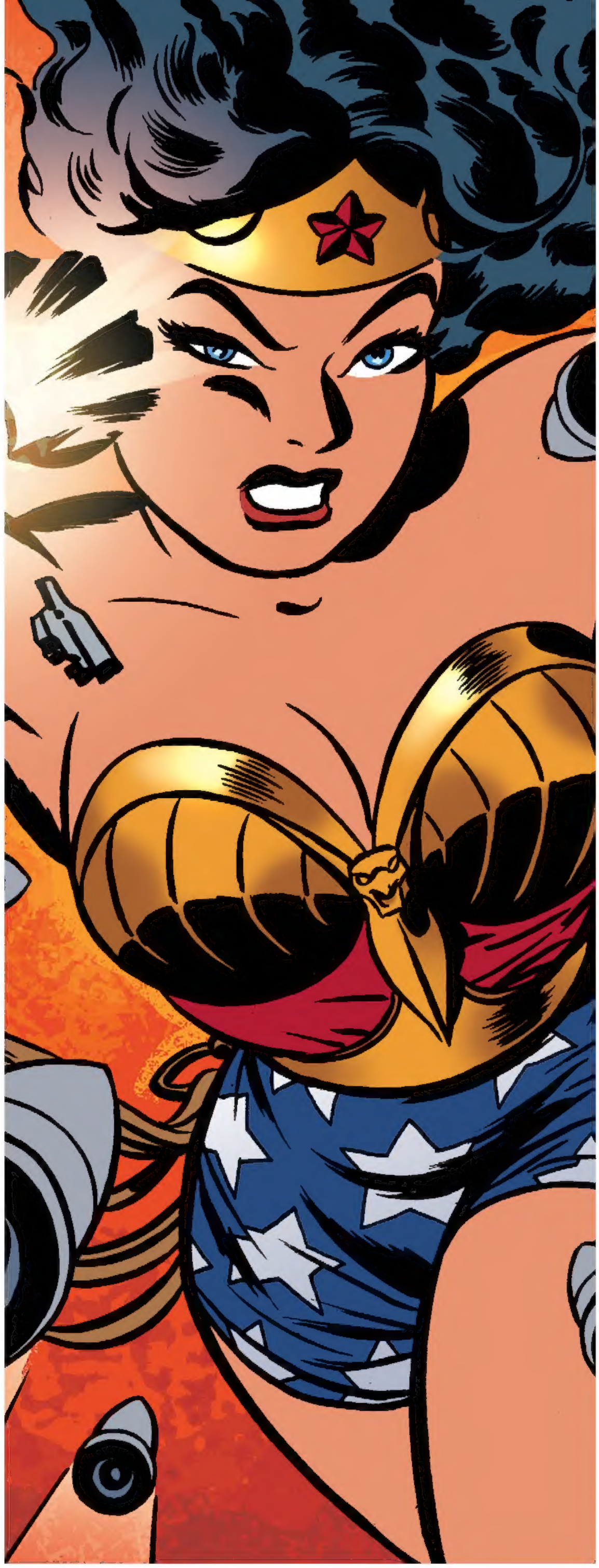

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DC: THE NEW FRONTIER

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Introduction

Heroes walked the Earth then. It was a simpler time, and every child of my generation knew their names. We laboriously made models out of plastic and as-yet-unmaligned glue, building their craft. We had their pictures on our bedroom walls. It was the moment when man broke the bounds of our eternal home on this world, and soared through sky and space like gods. From the flight of the X-15 on, the impossible became real.

Imagination was rich then, too. The new medium of television was linking the globe's distant corners in new ways, and the old media felt the need to respond. For comics, it was a time of experimentation with both the concept of what it was to be a hero and with the seemingly thousands of environments for heroism. The writers at DC placed men in danger in every possible situation: war, peace, crime, space, time, in skies and under seas, and even improbable combinations like an island where dinosaurs survived to battle 20th century soldiers.

This was clearly the world of Darwyn Cooke's childhood, and, having grown to maturity with a mastery of storytelling and image honed in the art of animation, he chose to return to the twin iconographies of his childhood and combine them. THE NEW FRONTIER is assertively set in America as the 1950s fade into the '60s, and it brings together the changes in our culture with the stories in our comics in a way that was impossible at the time. The writers and artists working on comics during those years saw the changes as current events, swaying to and fro, not as the clearer pattern that history makes them out to be. And even for those who wanted to play a part in that cultural change (and there were many within the world of comics), the fear of speaking out was great in the years just after witch-hunts became a national pastime, with comics bearing scars from the lightest of brushes wielding tar and feathers.

So Darwyn chose to revisit this world with the freedoms of the 21st century, and tell a tale that was fundamentally of the mid-20th.

The first freedom he exercised was the ability to cross the invisible boundaries that rigidly divided comics in those years: the stark walls of editorial offices that were often prisons for characters and talent alike. It was inconceivable in the DC comics of 1960 to have characters from Bob Kanigher's war comics meet the superheroes who populated the Justice League, or to have either exist in the same world as the Blackhawks. There were creative advantages to this approach: you didn't have to build complex reasons into every story why another hero wouldn't come in and help solve your protagonist's problems, for one, and the need to tell story after story set in a single character's

fictional world pushed writers to invent richer casts of villains and supporting characters for each hero than is the case today. Darwyn went back to the beginning and structured a story that allowed the heroes and their casts to mingle, and look at what some of the likely touch points would have been. The results of the exercise are fascinating.

The second freedom he exercised was to retell stories without being bound by the way they were first told. The last few years of comics have opened the serial medium up to alternate versions of characters' origins or canonical adventures in ways that a generation of comics fans-turned-writers (myself included) shunned. For THE NEW FRONTIER, this became a vital lubricant to allow the mixing of mythology between the characters and the creation of common themes of great importance.

The final freedom was the modern ability to add issues from the real world into the fictional worlds of our characters. THE NEW FRONTIER touches lightly on the great dilemmas of its period as it moves from McCarthy to Kennedy, but each deft touch brings the story onto a very large stage with echoes of the challenges we faced. It is a very special gift of comics, with their ease at transcending space and time, to mix reality with fiction seamlessly, and Darwyn does it especially well. Each nugget gives a moment of archetype and sets the stage for what the reader can fill in from his or her knowledge of the time... or merely move quickly past, if the knowledge isn't there. These anchors can be enduring additions to the myths of our characters: I smiled to see the echo of a story I wrote over 25 years ago, in a scene alluding to the Justice Society's break-up being caused by a Congressional investigation. When I added that bit to the history of our characters at a time already two decades past when it was "supposed" to have happened, I didn't expect to find it being used so many years later.

Nor, I suspect, does Darwyn know what of this work will show up in another storyteller's tales of our heroes, years down the road. A visual trick, perhaps, like his sense of the Flash in motion. Or a line that just fits a character so well. There are many such within, and only time will tell what endures. The story of our heroes is a mosaic, intricately built by many talents over many decades, and often we don't know which tiles will become keystones for a new element in the design. But a wise man taught me that the reader can tell which are placed in the mosaic with sincerity, and only those can endure.

So come back to a time of heroes, and a tale that Darwyn Cooke needed to tell, of how they came to walk the Earth and reach beyond it. And whether you lived in those times or not, as you turn the pages, you will now...

PAUL LEVITZ
2004

DC: The New Frontier

Prologue

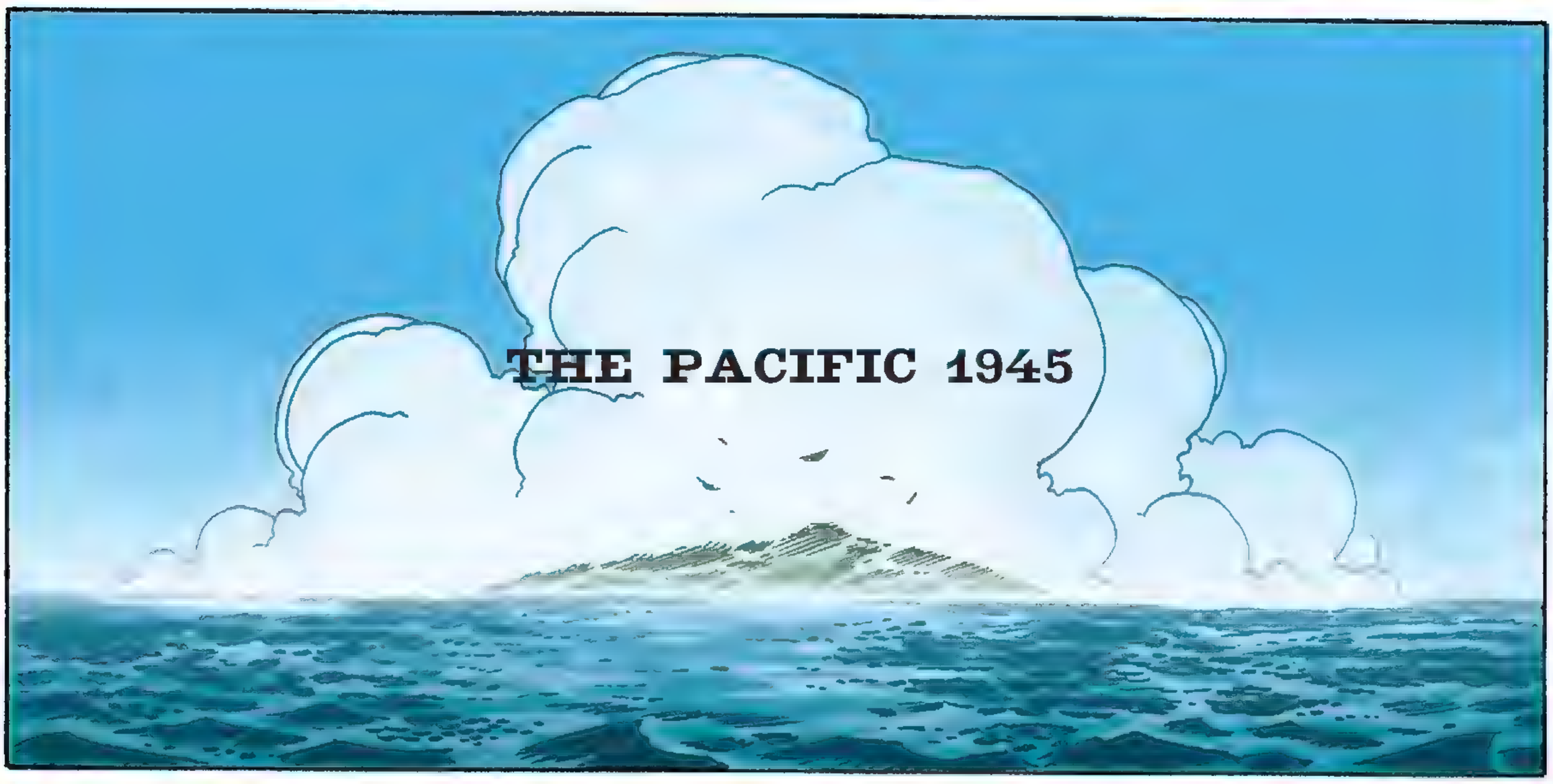
WITH THE NAZIS DEFEATED, THE ALLIED FORCES WASTED NO TIME LOCATING AND APPROPRIATING THE LEADING SCIENTIFIC MINDS OF HITLER'S GERMANY. ONE SCIENTIST WAS SO IMPORTANT TO AMERICA'S POST-WAR PLANS, HE WAS SECRETLY TRANSPORTED THROUGH THE PACIFIC THEATRE TO AVOID DETECTION.

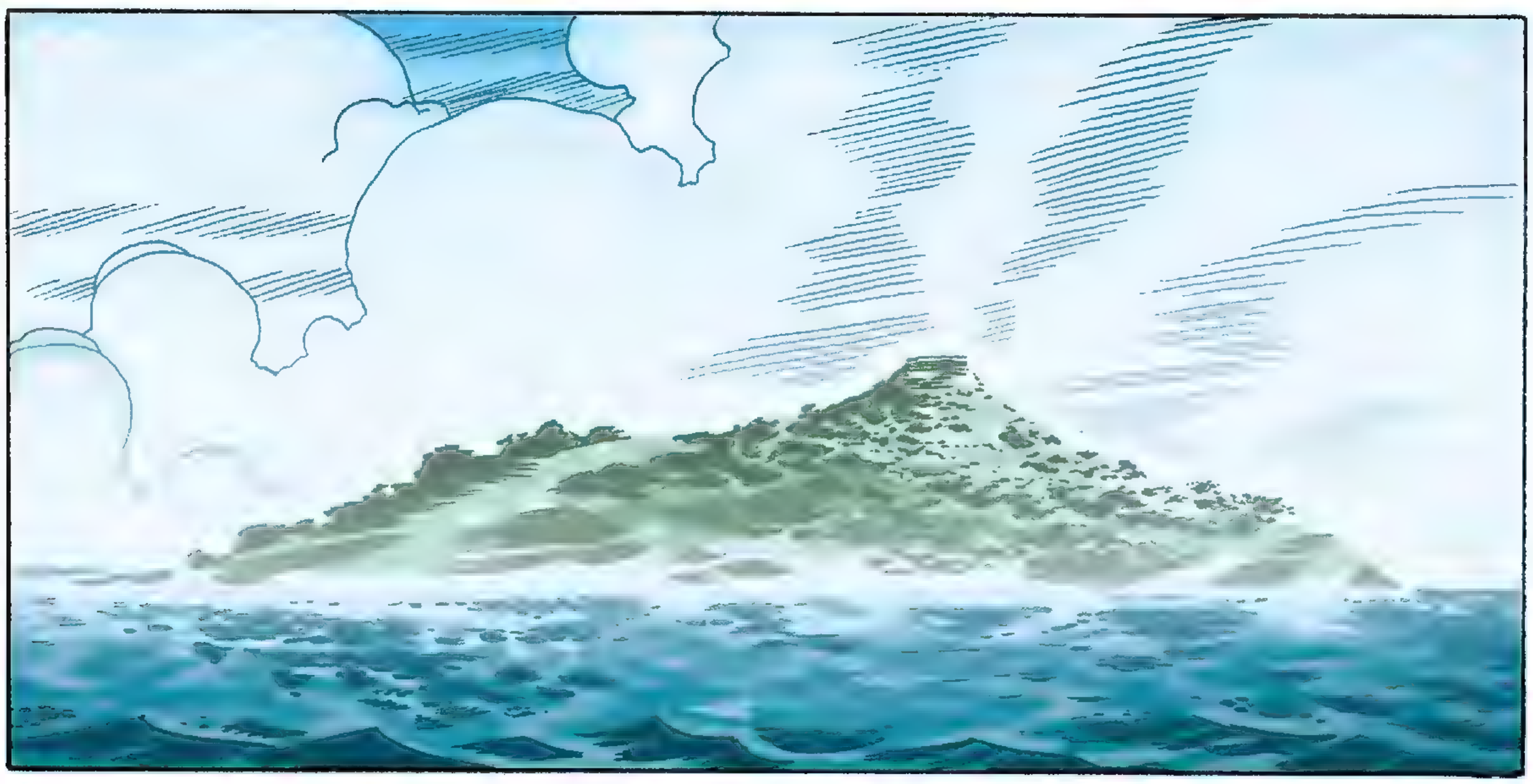
WHEN THE PLANE CARRYING THE SCIENTIST AND A SQUAD OF COMMANDOS GOES MISSING OVER THE OCEAN, A RESCUE OPERATION IS QUICKLY FORMED.

AFTER TWO YEARS OF DISTINGUISHED COMBAT IN EVERY THEATRE OF WAR, FOUR REMARKABLE MEN ARE CALLED UP TO BRING THE SCIENTIST BACK OR DIE TRYING.

THEY ARE "THE LOSERS," A UNIQUE GROUP OF SERVICE-MEN ATTACHED TO THE O.S.S.

CHAPTER ONE
ANALOG HEROES





THIS IS THE STORY OF THE LOSERS

CAPT. STORM US NAVY 'SARGE' PETERSEN U.S.M.C.
'GUNNER' WILSON U.S.M.C JOHN CLOUD USAAF

SHOULD ANYONE FIND THIS MESSAGE, LET IT SERVE AS A RECORD OF OUR FINAL MISSION FOR THE O.S.S

Operation codename: FOUR HORSEMEN
Unit codename: LOSERS
Mission summary: Military escort for Axis scientist Dieter Teschner crashed on remote Pacific island. Communication abruptly ended within hours of their crash. Last communication was spotty but it is clear the squad has suffered serious casualties and is in dire need of transport off the island. The Losers are to proceed to the set coordinates with all due speed and retrieve the scientist at all costs. O.S.S. Squadron leader: Colonel Richard Flagg, USAAF, currently attached to O.S.S. Please see attached files for background on retrieval subjects.

YOU SURE THIS IS THE SPOT, SKIPPER?

THE COORDINATES ARE BANG ON. THE ISLAND MUST BE IN THAT BANK OF MIST. DROP THE BIRD.

ALBATROSS IS CLEAR.

YOU GUYS HEAR THAT?

IT'S SOMETHING *BIG*, AND IT'S CLOSE...MAYBE A *JAP SHIP*. KEEP YOUR EYES OPEN.

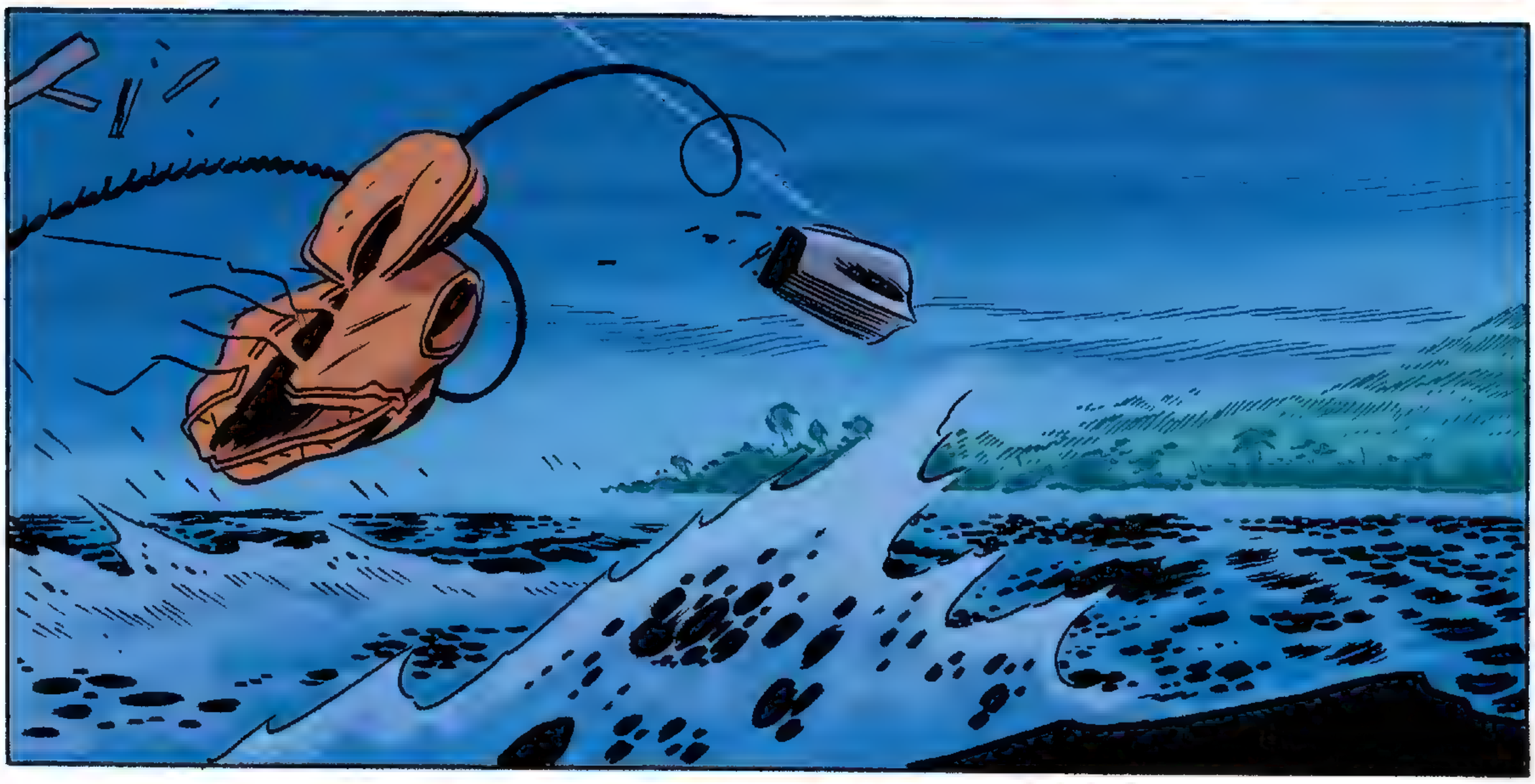
CAN'T SEE *DIDDLY* IN THIS SOUP.

THERE! PORT SIDE!!

CRIMINEY!!

HANG ON!

I GOT YA, POOCH!



DAMAGE REPORT-- SOUND OFF, LOSERS.

YO!

I'M FIVE BY FIVE.

RANG MY BELL, SKIPPER, BUT I'M ON THE BEAM.

LET'S SALVAGE THE GEAR, ASAP.

WHAT THE *HELL* WAS THAT *THING*?

I DON'T KNOW WHAT IT WAS, CLOUD, BUT I WAS THINKING... WHAT IF IT HAS FRIENDS ON THE ISLAND?

ROGER THAT, SARGE. 'ZOOKA IS LOADED AND READY.

GRRRRRR

RRRRRR

EH? WHAT IS IT, POOCH?

THOOM--
THOOM--

RRRR
AAAR
OAAR

NOW THERE'S SOMETHING YA DON'T SEE EVERY DAY.

UH, GUNNER...

ROGER THAT!

MAN, WHAT A TARGET!

KA-BOOM!

ANYTIME SARGE!

KEEP YER SHIRT ON, JUNIOR.

LOOK AT THAT *BEAST!*

DRIVE 'ER LIKE YA OWN 'ER!

THE TAIL! *THE TAIL!! HIT THE DECK!*

KABOOM
MAN, THAT WAS CLOSE! ALL RIGHT JUNIOR, ON YER FEET AND--
GUNNER?
SUH-SUH-- SUHARGE...I-I-I-I-I-I'M...
LUSPAC

...AAK.

PLING!

PLING!

BOOM

BOOM

THE TNT DIDN'T STOP THE LEVIATHAN... BUT IT HAD COST IT AN ARM. AFTER EYEING US CAREFULLY, IT STALKED OFF INTO THE MIST, IN SEARCH OF LESS DANGEROUS GAME.

GUNNER WAS 23 YEARS OLD. IN BOTH YEARS AND SPIRIT HE HAD BEEN OUR YOUNGEST BROTHER.

I'D KNOWN HIM LESS THAN TWO YEARS. BUT I KNEW HIM BETTER, AND LOVED HIM MORE, THAN MY OWN FAMILY. AND I KNEW THAT IF THEY COULD, STORM AND SARGE WOULD SAY THE SAME...

...BUT HIS SPIRIT HAD ALREADY TAKEN FLIGHT.

CAN ONE OF YOU GUYS BRING ME A TARP?

SARGE, I...

PLEASE SKIPPER.

JUST BRING ME THE TARP.

THE SKIPPER GOT US TO THE ISLAND, BUT ***NAVAJO*** KNOW-HOW KEPT US OFF THE ANIMAL TRAILS AND DOWNWIND.

HOW'S IT LOOK UP THERE?

NO SIGN OF FLAGG OR HIS SQUAD, BUT IT LOOKS SECURE.

THE SCENT OF CORDITE AND PACKING GREASE HAD LED US TO A CAVE THAT HAD BEEN FORTIFIED BY PREVIOUS VISITORS.

WE'VE GOT SMALL ARMS FROM ***JAPANESE, AUSTRALIAN*** AND ***AMERICAN*** UNITS.

THIS CAVE HAS SEEN A LOT OF ACTION.

THERE ARE EMPTY K-RATION CANS HIDDEN UNDER THIS STUFF. THEY'RE ***RECENT.*** SO MAYBE WE'RE IN TIME AFTER ALL.

US ARMY

WE DECIDED TO MAKE CAMP HERE, AND IF THE MISSING SQUAD DIDN'T RETURN BY DAYBREAK, WE'D BEGIN A PERIMETER SEARCH.

SARGE WAS INCONSOLABLE ABOUT GUNNER. HE TOOK THE FIRST WATCH, AFTER HE BURIED THE BOY.

DAWN.

STORM AND I ARE AWAKENED BY THE DISTANT SOUND OF ***ROCKET FIRE.*** WEAPONS IN HAND, WE STOP SHORT AT THE MOUTH OF OUR SANCTUM.

I CONFESS THAT MY EDUCATION REGARDING ***PREHISTORIC TIMES*** WAS LACKING, BUT EVEN I COULD SEE THIS WAS A PLACE OF GREAT ***MAGIC.*** A LAND FORGOTTEN BY THE MARCH OF TIME.

BY GOD!

BAZOOKA FIRE. *SARGE?*

BOOM

IT'S COMING FROM THE VALLEY BY THOSE HILLS.

BOOM

THAT MULE-HEADED *OLD CRANK!*

WE'VE GOT TO FIND A WAY DOWN THERE, *PRONTO!*

CLOUD! DON'T LOOK NOW--

--BUT WHEN I CALL IT, HIT THE DECK!

NOW!

AARRRGGGH!!

KRACK

I'VE HAD IT, CLOUD. GET CLEAR BEFORE ***THEY*** CIRCLE BACK.

NEGATIVE, SKIPPER. WE EVAC ***TOGETHER.***

BUDDA BUDDA BUDDA BUDDA

SKIPPER!!

GGNAAAHHH!

SO LONG, JOHN.

IN LESS THAN 14 HOURS *THE LOSERS* WERE NO MORE.

THE NAVAJO BELIEVE IN THE NOTION THAT ALL POWERFUL FORCES COME IN GROUPS OF ***FOUR.*** THERE IS NO MAGIC IN THE ONE.

AS I WATCHED MY BROTHER DISAPPEAR INTO THE MISTS, MY HEART FILLED WITH *DESPAIR*.

THE FEAR OF *DEATH* COWERED IN THE FACE OF MY FEAR OF LIVING THROUGH THIS *NIGHTMARE-- ALONE* WITH THE MEMORY OF MY BROTHERS' SACRIFICE TO HAUNT MY DAYS.

A FRUITLESS SEARCH CONVINCED ME THE MEN WE WERE SENT TO RESCUE HAD MET A FATE SIMILAR TO THAT OF MY BROTHERS.

POOCH!

SARGE? IS THAT YOU?

SUNSET BROUGHT ME BACK TO THE CAVE. MY HEART *LEAPT* AT THE SIGHT THAT AWAITED ME.

SARGE?

RIGHT....
THE OLD GUY.

HE
DIDN'T MAKE
IT.

ARE YOU *COLONEL FLAGG?*

AFFIRMATIVE. I WAS ON THE NORTH FACE PLANTING SOME BOOBY TRAPS WHEN I HEARD YOUR *FIREFIGHT* LAST NIGHT.

ON MY WAY HERE I SPOTTED THE OLD MAN GOING AFTER THAT FRIGGIN' *MONSTER* ON HIS OWN. GOT SIDETRACKED. NOW WHO THE HELL ARE YOU, AND WHAT ARE YOU DOING ON THIS *DEATHTRAP?*

NAME'S *CLOUD.* LIEUTENANT, U.S.A.A.F. I WAS SENT HERE, ALONG WITH THAT "OLD MAN" AND TWO OTHER MEN, TO GET *YOUR* ASS OFF THIS DEATHTRAP.

CLOUD? THE NAVAJO *ACE?* THIS MUST'VE BEEN A HEAVY OPERATION IF O.S.S. SENT *THE LOSERS* AFTER US.

ROUND UP THE REST OF YOUR SQUAD AND LET'S MOVE OUT.

MY SQUAD? WHY THEY'RE RIGHT HERE LIEUTENANT CLOUD. *IN MY POCKET.* IN MY OTHER POCKET IS A *FILM COPY* OF DR. TESCHNER'S NOTES.

SO IF YOU'VE GOT A WAY OFF THIS ROCK, WE'D *ALL* BE HAPPY TO MOVE OUT, *ASAP.*

MY SPIRIT WAS ***BUOYED*** BY THE THOUGHT THAT I COULD AT LEAST COMPLETE THE MISSION THAT COST ME MY FRIENDS. THE NAVAJO IN ME WAS READY TO LEAVE THIS PLACE, GO BACK TO THE SACRED CANYON OF MY PEOPLE, AND ***FIND MY PEACE.***

MOST PEOPLE I ENCOUNTER REGARD THE NAVAJO AS ***SAVAGES.*** BUT IT WAS MY AMERICAN SIDE THAT DEMANDED ***VENGEANCE*** FOR THE LIVES OF MY FELLOW WARRIORS.

THERE'S A COMPASS IN THE SURVIVAL PACK. THE ***ALBATROSS*** IS ABOUT 100 YARDS CLEAR OF THE MIST ***DUE SOUTH.*** THERE'S A FLARE GUN IF YOU NE--

NOW HANG ON THERE ***CHIEF.*** YOU MAKE IT SOUND LIKE YOU'RE ***STAYING*** ON THIS JUNGLE BUFFET.

THREE OF ***FOUR*** HAVE ALREADY BEEN COMMITTED. IT ISN'T IMPORTANT IF I SUCCEED OR FAIL...WHAT IS IMPORTANT IS ***I AM THE FOURTH,*** AND MY PATH IS ***SET.***

IN OTHER WORDS... THE ***BAD GUYS*** HAVE KILLED THE LONE RANGER AND THE CAVALRY AND NOW IT'S UP TO THE ***INJUN SIDEKICK*** TO AVENGE THEM. YOU ***SABBY*** THAT, ***PALEFACE?*** I'M GOING TO ***KILL*** THAT ***MONSTER.***

AND THEN WHAT? SCALP HIM? JEEZ CHIEF, YOU'RE AS CRAZY AS THAT OLD SERGEANT. JUST GET IN THE RAFT AND WE'LL BE IN PEARL FOR BREAKFAST.

GOODBYE FLAGG.

ALL RIGHT CHIE-- CLOUD. BUT IT IS KINDA FUNNY. I MEAN, THE INDIAN RESCUING THE COWBOY. GOOD LUCK TO YOU.

AND WITH THAT, THE DOG AND I PLUNGED BACK INTO THE WORLD WE'D BEEN HANDED.

UPON OUR RETURN, I BLOCKED THE CAVE ENTRANCE AND BUILT A GREAT FIRE. THE ***SWEAT LODGE*** IS A TRADITIONAL EXPERIENCE FOR A ***WARRIOR*** BEFORE A ***GREAT HUNT.***

TAKING THE SMOKE IS KNOWN TO PROVIDE ***VISIONS*** FOR THOSE SEEKING KNOWLEDGE.

THAT NIGHT I SAW MY BROTHERS ON THE OTHER SIDE, AND WITH GREAT CALM I SAW THAT IT WAS I THAT WAS OUT OF PLACE--

THEY STOOD ***CLEAR AND BRIGHT,*** AND THEIR HANDS WERE FRESH AND CLEAN OF ALL ***THE HORRORS*** THEY HAD WROUGHT. I WOULD JOIN THEM.

THE FOLLOWING MORNING WE SPOT THE BEAST NORTH OF THE CAVE. ARMED WITH AN M-1 GRENADE LAUNCHER AND MAN'S BEST FRIEND, I SET OUT TO INTERCEPT MY FATE.

I HOWL INTO THE SACRED WIND TO ATTRACT MY PREY. THIS WILL BE A ***DAY OF DAYS.***

SO INTENT AM I THAT IT IS A SECOND TOO LATE BEFORE I RECALL ***FLAGG'S*** WORDS..."I WAS PLANTING ***BOOBY TRAPS*** ON THE ***NORTH*** FACE..."

I FEEL IT RIP INTO MY STOMACH AND BACK, THE DOG'S YELP THE LAST THING I HEAR BEFORE THE SOUND OF THE BLAST TEARS APART MY EARDRUMS.

KOOM

SMOKE CLEARING... BUT THERE'S NO PAIN. SHOCK, I SUPPOSE. THE DOG GROWS STILL AND I KNOW IT IS TIME.

IN MY MIND I AM ***RELAXED*** AND ***READY*** TO JOIN MY BROTHERS.

THERE IS JUST *ONE MORE THING* TO DO.

THE MONSTER APPROACHED AND STOOD BEFORE ME, ITS HOT BREATH ON MY BARE LEGS. IT KNEW I WAS TRAPPED, AND SEEMED TO *RELISH* THE MOMENT...

...THE SCENT OF MY *BLOOD.* MY HEAD GREW LIGHT AS I FORCED MYSELF UP.

IN THE SKY ABOVE ME, *A MIRACLE.*

WHEN I WAS ***BORN,*** I WAS NAMED AFTER A GREAT ***MOUNTED WARRIOR OF THE CLOUDS.*** AND NOW HERE HE WAS, A GRAND AND SILENT WITNESS TO MY DEATH.

I DECIDE IT IS THE ***LAST THING*** I WANT TO SEE.

I CLOSE MY EYES...

RNG

PING

...AND I TAKE FLIGHT.

ASK MY ***FAMILY*** AND THEY'LL TELL YOU I WAS A ***NAVAJO.*** ASK THE ***ARMY*** AIR FORCE AND THEY'LL SAY I WAS AN ***AMERICAN.***

I AM JOHN CLOUD

BUT IF YOU ASK MY ***BROTHERS,*** THEY'LL SET YOU STRAIGHT.

JOHN CLOUD WAS A ***LOSER.***

WHERE HAD ALL THE HEROES GONE?

IN AMERICA, AFTER THE GREAT WAR, MANY WOULD CLAIM WE DIDN'T NEED THEM ANYMORE. ON THE SURFACE, LIFE WAS BETTER THAN EVER.

BUT IF YOU VENTURED CLOSER, IT BECAME CLEAR THAT A GREAT DEAL OF THIS WAS A FACADE.

RACISM, CIVIL RIGHTS ABUSE, SUPPRESSION OF FREE SPEECH, SEXISM AND GOVERNMENT PERSECUTION THAT SIDESTEPPED THE CONSTITUTION WERE THE ORDER OF THE DAY.

AND LOOMING DARKLY ABOVE ALL OF THIS, THE TERRIBLE, NEBULOUS SHAPE OF A NUCLEAR FUTURE.

IN THE FACE OF THIS MORAL AND RATIONAL "SLIPPAGE," THE LOGICAL QUESTION REMAINED... WHO WOULD RISE TO THE MORAL CHALLENGE OF THIS BOLD NEW ERA?

TEST AREA 12

WHERE WERE THE HEROES OF TOMORROW?

ADOLF HITLER'S CONTROL OF THE LEGENDARY "SPEAR OF DESTINY" KEPT THE SUPER-HEROES OUT OF THE GREAT WAR. IN THE END IT WAS MORTAL MEN AND WOMEN WHO CARRIED THE DAY IN THE BATTLEFIELDS OF EUROPE AND NORTH AFRICA.

THE CONCLUSION OF THE WAR IN THE PACIFIC WAS ANOTHER STORY. THE ADVENT OF NUCLEAR WARFARE GAVE MAN THE ABILITY TO DESTROY THE WORLD SEVERAL TIMES OVER.

WITHIN SCANT YEARS OF THEIR ALLIANCE TO DEFEAT THE NAZIS, THE CHASM BETWEEN AMERCIAN AND RUSSIAN IDEOLOGIES DEEPENED.

WITH A DEADLY CORDON OF WARHEADS CREATING A STALEMATE, THE "COLD WAR" BEGAN-- AN ERA OF ESPIONAGE, BLACKMAIL AND NATIONALISTIC PROPAGANDA.

ON THE HOMEFRONT, CONGRESSIONAL "HEARINGS" SOUGHT TO ROOT OUT COMMUNIST INFILTRATORS AND OTHER CITIZENS GUILTY OF "UNAMERICAN ACTIVITIES." THE MASKED ADVENTURERS WERE BRANDED OUTLAWS AND SUBVERSIVES. FACED WITH PUBLIC UNMASKING, THE JUSTICE SOCIETY RETIRED. MANY OTHERS FOLLOWED SUIT.

SOME WERE BEYOND THE CONTROL OF MANKIND.

OTHERS WERE SIMPLE-MINDED PATRIOTS, HAPPY TO WAVE "SO LONG" AND GO PEDDLE THEIR PAPERS.

A RARE FEW DISPLAYED THE CUNNING AND THE CONVICTION TO EVADE CAPTURE.

DOMESTIC EMERGENCIES WERE HANDLED BY PARAMILITARY UNITS LIKE THE CHALLENGERS OF THE UNKNOWN, OR THE GOVERNMENT-FINANCED TASK FORCE X, A.K.A "THE SUICIDE SQUAD!"

IRONICALLY, IN PLACES LIKE FRENCH INDOCHINA, U.S. FOREIGN POLICY WAS BEING COVERTLY ENFORCED BY AN IMMORTAL... AND AN ALIEN.

NUCLEAR WEAPONS RULED OUT LARGE-SCALE CONFLICT, AND THE SUPERPOWERS SOUGHT A FRESH ARENA IN WHICH TO WAGE THEIR IDEOLOGICAL BATTLE.

AND THEY FOUND IT IN THE HEAVENS ABOVE, TECHNOLOGY HAD MADE IT POSSIBLE FOR MAN TO CONSIDER REACHING BEYOND HIS EARTHLY CRADLE, FOR AMERICA, IT WAS A RACE TO AVOID COMMMUNIST DOMINATION OF THE SKIES.

Bell Aircraft

WHAT TYPE OF PERSON-- WHAT NEW BREED OF HERO WOULD HAVE THE CHARACTER AND DARING TO LEAD AMERICA TO THE EDGE OF THIS NEW FRONTIER?

BELL Aircraft X-1A

X-1B

EDWARDS AIR FORCE BASE
SPRING - 1948

SO *SHE'S* TEARING AROUND THE ROOM AND LARRY'S SCREAMING 'HIT THE SILK! *HIT THE SILK!!*'

WELL NOW, LOOKY HERE! I TOLD YOU THESE PILOTS ARE GETTING YOUNGER EVERY *GOL-DANG* DAY!

OH, I'M NOT A PILOT MA'AM... AT LEAST, I-I MEAN, NOT YET ANYWAYS.

I KNOW IT'S LATE, AND I'M KINDA YOUNG TO BE HERE AND ALL...BUT I CAME TO SEE *MR. YEAGER* AND I READ IN LIFE MAGAZINE THAT HE COMES TO THE 'FLY INN' AFTER WORK. ARE YOU MISS BARNES??

MISS BARNES? AREN'T *YOU* A CAUTION?

CALL ME PANCHO, SWEETIE, EVERYBODY DOES. NOW I'LL IGNORE THE FACT THAT IT'S A SCHOOL NIGHT...

...IF YOU TELL ME WHAT A *HALF-PINT* LIKE YOURSELF WANTS WITH A GRUMPY OLD *PECKERWOOD* LIKE CHUCK YEAGER.

GOSH, MISS... PANCHO, HE'S THE *GREATEST* PILOT THAT EVER LIVED, AND, I FIGURE TO BE A PILOT MYSELF AND, WELL JEEZ, I GUESS IT'S LIKE HE'S...

MY HERO.

THAT'S A FINE JACKET YOU HAVE THERE, YOUNG CAPTAIN.

YOU MIND TELLING ME WHERE YOU GOT IT?

IT-- IT BELONGED TO MY DAD.

"HE FLEW WITH YOU OVER EUROPE. MOM SAYS THAT HE SHOT DOWN ***SIX*** NAZI PLANES. SHE SAYS THAT HIS NICKNAME WAS 'THE FLYING MARTINI' ON ACCOUNTA' HIS NAME WAS MARTIN."

"I *REMEMBER* YOUR DADDY..."

"HE WAS A DAMN FINE PILOT, SON. YOU... YOUR MOM... YOU CAN BE ***MIGHTY PROUD*** OF HIM."

MY BUDDY

NOW TELL ME SON, WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP YOU?

I WANT TO SHOW YOU SOMETHING SIR- I THINK YOU'LL LIKE IT.

BLACKHAWK

OOOOEEE! DANG SON, THIS IS ONE *FINE* MODEL YOU'VE GOT HERE.

DID YOU CARVE THIS YOURSELF?

YES SIR, FROM THE PHOTOS IN LIFE MAGAZINE.

I WAS *KINDA* HOPING THAT YOU COULD AUTOGRAPH IT FOR ME.

60 62

JUST MAKE IT OUT TO *HAL--*

HAL JORDAN.

CHAPTER TWO

STATE OF THE UNION SUIT

BAM!

URF!

ERRREEEEEE SNAAPP

NO!

BAM BAM

LOOK OUT!

THE RAIL!

AAAAAAAAAAAAAA

Recent Congressional hearings aimed at purging the nation of subversive influence target the masked vigilantes of urban America.

by IRIS WEST

WASHINGTON DECLARES WAR ON THE MYSTERY MEN

ON AN UNCHARACTERISTICALLY BALMY MAY EVENING THE MASKED ADVENTURER KNOWN AS HOURMAN PLUNGED TO HIS DEATH, TAKING FOUR COAST CITY POLICEMEN WITH HIM.

It was the latest and most tragic chapter in the Eisenhower Administration's efforts to register and reveal the identities of the Nation's "masked do-gooders".The fallen officers were in pursuit of Hourman for questioning regarding a Federal warrant. Hourman was one of a handful of Vigilantes that refuse to retire or register with the Congressional Commitee on Un-American Activities.

The Federal response has been swift and decisive; last month a bill passed unanimously making vigilantism a federal offense, akin to treason. Only those registered with the FBI and cleared by Congress are allowed to legally operate in government sanctioned ways.

It was four years ago, in the wake of the Alger Hiss case, that the House on Unamerican Activities and Senator Joe McCarthy turned their attention to segments of the populace that enjoyed the public spotlight.

Hollywood in particular has been in the headlines of late, as congress sopeonas dozens of actors, directors and screenwriters with known communist associations.

Supporters consider it key to purge Hollywood of "red thinking" that could infest the entertainment world, but critics call it a shameless circus, conducted for publicity .

Whether the hearings are a circus or not, one thing is certain; the repercussions are not. Hollywood insiders relate that even the slightest communist affiliation or refusal to name associates could lead to "blacklisting." Film makers who've been labeled

The Hourman, AKA Rex Tyler, plunges to his death along with four uniformed police officers. The only attendees at his funeral were a small clutch of mourners that came to pay their respects to a man that had saved their lives as Hourman.

communist sympathizers are unable to find work of any sort.

MAN WITHOUT A COUNTRY

Eight months ago Roy Raymond was on top of the world. A hit television show, radio program and weekly column made him one of America's best known celebrities. When brought before the HUAC commitee, Raymond refused to inform on any friends or associates, and pleaded the Fifth amendment in regards to himself.

He was cited for contempt and branded a communist sympathizer.

"Something has gone horribly wrong with this country." states Raymond. " To imagine that this great nation has somehow allowed muckrakers like McCarthy enough power to degrade and destroy private citizens...I (Raymond pauses, looks away)...I can't stay here anymore. I've lost everything. But I suppose the worst of it is I've lost my home. My faith in my country."

Above: the JSA takes a final walk into the sunset. Facing page: Photo taken seconds before the Bat-Man defeated Superman with explosive charge. After several well-placed boots to the solar plexus, the Bat-Man made good his escape. Analysis of the chemical charge used on Superman has been inconclusive.

EISENHOWER INTERVENES

"It was Richard Nixon's idea to go after the Masked Marvels" confides Roy Cohn, over drinks in a Beltway cocktail bar. Cohn has been Senator Joe McCarthy's hachet man, or assistant, for several months.He is clearly a man who loves his work.

After hearing a few friendly credentials, Cohn is happy to speak, with a candor that borders on arrogance. He pauses to drink, his eyes darting with the light of the bartop. "Hunting Reds in the entertainment industry sells newspapers- this Masked Freak thing would be a real opportunity.

After all, these people are flagrantly breaking dozens of municipal, state and federal laws, in the pursuit of their own idea of what's right and wrong." Another drink. "It just isn't American." Finally his eyes come up and the tone is confidential;"This aggression will not stand."

When it came to making an example, HUAC wisely targeted the largest, most visible collective; The Justice Society of America.

Months of public baiting and Federal pressure to appear before the congressional hearing went unanswered by the venerable JSA, until the President himself took public airtime on September 14 to order the Justice Society to support its country and make itself to available to Congress immediately.

After reading a list of allegations that ranged from inarguable to absurd, Congress demanded that the JSA unmask and reveal their identities, and to take an oath of loyalty to the current administration.

The JSA, however, had come prepared with an alternative of their own. They simply vanished. In a statement issued the following day, they refused to recognize Congress' authority, but as patriotic Americans they refuse to break Federal law. Henceforth they were retiring.

This set a remarkable precedent, and in the preceding weeks, dozens of masked adventurers followed suit.

At this date, only a half dozen have registered and taken the loyalty oath, most notably Superman and the Amazon princess, Wonder Woman.

The President himself enlisted the Man of Steel's help to round up the remaining Masked Men who refused to turn themselves in or retire. This was all it took to finish all but the most resourceful of the vigilantes. In a truly fantastic encounter, Superman cornered the legendary Bat-Man that haunts Gotham City's underworld. Eyewitness accounts indicate that Superman's victory seemed assured until he was hit in the face by a chemical explosive of some sort by the Gotham City Bat-Man.

Analysis of the chemical charge has been inconclusive. The Bat-Man is still at large.

Task Force X's Suicide Squad defeat a commie threat in Paris last month.

TASK FORCE X

Concurrent to the constriction of vigilante activity, the Eisenhower administration broadened its support of paramilitary means to deal with the type of phenomena most often associated with the Mystery Men. Earlier this year the White House introduced Task Force X, a revamped version of Truman's wartime Suicude Squad- A group of highly trained government personnel, with state of the art technology and almost limitless resources.

"We're here because the time has come for Americans to take control of their destiny again." Air Force Colonel Rick Flagg is the field leader of Task Force X.

"Why do we need a bunch of circus sideshow types looking after our well-being? With our drive, and our knowledge and ability, there's nothing Americans can't take care of themselves. Task Force X is here to take charge in situations where the nation's safety and security are jeopardized by unforeseen forces. We've been trained and equipped to react creatively to any challenge, Terran or Alien, scientific or biologic."

AMERICAN TRAGEDY

Although a new order has emerged it is important that whatever our direction in the future, we recognize there is a certain debt owed to these masked loners.

Which brings us full circle to the death of the masked adventurer known as Hourman. Post mortem investigation uncovered he was Pharmaceutical Magnate Rex Tyler.

The autopsy indicated trace elements of several drugs, which are still under analysis. Tyler's journal gives us a glimpse into this troubled soul. His dependence on drugs, his sense of isolation and his pride at doing what he referred to as "good work."

Rex Tyler was a self made millionaire who saw something wrong with society, and acted on his principles.

He was a drug addict and he was wanted for federal crimes.

But corroborating reports indicate he personally had prevented 17 murders, 23 attempted rapes, 9 armed robberies and at least 5 acts of wanton madness that would have resulted in mass destruction.

He was principled and flawed . Loved by those he helped, and vilified by those that sought to control him.

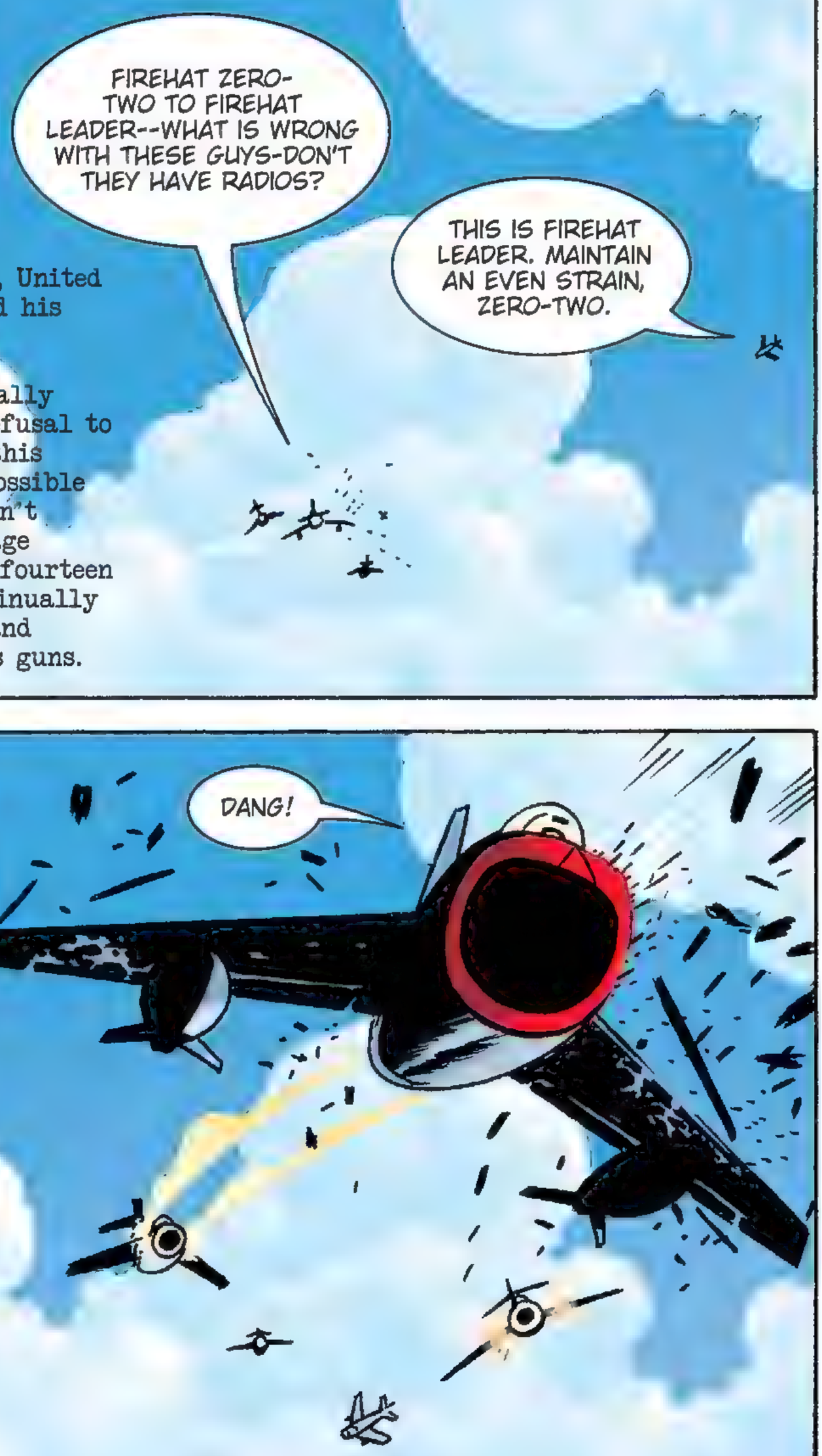
Upon posthumous reflection a tragic irony is revealed. Rex Tyler, AKA the Hourman, was a quintessential American. •

CHAPTER THREE

HEAVY TRAFFIC IN MIG ALLEY

Excerpt from report filed by COLONEL ACE MORGAN, United States Air Force regarding AIRMAN HAL JORDAN and his fitness for duty:

Airman Jordan is without question, the most naturally gifted pilot I have ever known. The issue is his refusal to use lethal force during enemy engagements. While this refusal would normally result in grounding and possible court-martial, the usual reasons or motivations don't apply. Airman Jordan has shown bravery and courage under fire unlike any I have witnessed during my fourteen months in Korea. During enemy engagements he continually puts himself in harm's way, baiting enemy pilots and drawing them into position for his squadron-mate's guns.



Which brings us to the date in question: JULY 27, 1953. Thanks to the armistice signing, the war had been over for exactly two hours, 23 minutes. Our orders were to recon the Yalu River Delta so Intelligence could draw up exact positions at the time of the cease fire. As I did not anticipate any enemy engagement, it seemed an ideal opportunity for myself and Airman Jordan to enjoy one last patrol.

But as supplementary evidence indicates, not everyone knew the war was over yet.

We had been engaged by three Mig fighters who obviously hadn't heard the good news.

MORGAN

WHERE ARE YOU *BIG DADDY?*

I CAN'T WAX ALL THREE OF THEM SON--YOU'RE GONNA HAFTA PULL UP!

TOK TOK TOK TOK T

DO YOU COPY? *PULL UP!*

BANDITS'VE TORN MY FLAPS AND RUDDER TO SPLINTERS, PAPPY-SHE HASN'T GOT IT IN HER! I THINK I GOTTA GO!

TOK TOK TOK TOK TOK TOK TOK

HIGHBALL

JORDAN

SFRAANG

SUFFERIN' SUZIE!!

GOTTA GO, GOTTA GO--

PUNCH IT HAL! *PUNCH IT!*

FUHUUUUU---!

OUTSTANDING!

F-307

Although Airman Jordan had successfully ejected from his aircraft, he became unable to activate his parachute.

Regulations and good judgment aside, I ask that you consider my choice that day.

I wish to state that no matter what the cost, I stand behind the actions I took that moment.

A sharp loop brought me over Jordan's tangent...

...confirming he was unable to act on his own behalf.

There was only one way to open that chute...

I'd have to pull the ripcord myself.

It would take luck for this to work--

--of course I missed him.

I pivoted at the apex of my forward motion from the seat--

--and pointed myself like an arrow towards the bullseye. I was gaining terrific speed and I'd only get this one chance.

I managed to claw the ripcord free and as his chute filled with air he was snatched away.

For a complete account of Airman Jordan's actions after this point, I refer you to his and helicopter pilot Johnstone's supplemental reports.

SOUTH KOREA
100 KILOMETERS WEST

I GOTTA SAY ***MISS LANE,*** YOU'RE THE ONLY PERSON I KNOW WHO COULD FIND ***FRESH FRUIT*** IN A PLACE LIKE THIS.

JIMMY--***PLEASE.*** I'M THE ONLY WOMAN WITHIN 100 MILES. THESE G.I.'S WOULD GIVE ME ***ANYTHING*** IN THE CAMP FOR TEN MINUTES WORTH OF CHIT-CHAT OR A MENTION IN ONE OF ***MY*** ARTICLES.

I CANNOT ***WAIT*** TO GET TO A CLEAN HOTEL AND HAVE A GOOD SOAK.

SPEAKING OF THAT, WE'RE ALL PACKED. SHOULDN'T WE JOIN THE COLUMN?

YOU JUST DON'T GET IT, DO YOU OLSEN?

PRESS

HOW CAN A TEENAGER SMART ENOUGH TO ***FAKE*** PRESS I.D. AND ***SCAM*** PASSAGE ON A TRANSPORT TO GET OVER HERE BE SO ***DUMB*** ABOUT THE FEMININE MYSTIQUE? IT APPLIES TO ***MORE*** THAN ORANGES KIDDO.

HEY STEVE!

THANKS FOR THE LIFT! MEET BOY STOWAWAY JIMMY OLSEN.

NO PROBLEMO LOIS! ***SEOUL*** JUST HASN'T BEEN THE SAME SINCE YOU CAME TO THE FRONT.

WELL ***STEP ON IT*** FLYBOY--THE FIRST ROUND'S ON ME!

THE FIRST THING IS THE SENSE OF WIND RUSHING BRISKLY PAST MY FACE.

THEN I REALIZE I'M HANGING--OR SOMETHING. BLISSFUL, REALLY.

AND THEN IT ALL COMES RUSHING FORWARD. I'M IN MY *CHUTE*--AND I'M ABOUT TO LAND IN A *TRENCH* OF SOME KIND.

AND I'LL BE *DAMNED* IF THAT ISN'T A *NORTH KOREAN* SOLDIER.

WITH A *MACHINE GUN.*

AAAIIIEEE!!

THIS IS FIREBASE RESCUE-- WE HAVE TWO PILOTS DOWN IN SECTOR NINE. FIRST PILOT IS BEING EVAC'ED BY NAVAL UNIT. INLAND PILOT IS ALL OURS. ANY H-5 SERIES WITHIN RETRIEVAL RANGE RESPOND. OVER.

THIS IS ***DIZZY ONE-NINER.*** I AM IN THE AIR AND ON THE APRON OF ***SECTOR NINE.*** WILL BE GLAD TO PICK UP THAT FLYBOY. ***OVER.***

WE'RE DOING WHAT WITH WHO NOW?

PIECE OF CAKE, LOIS. THE WAR'S ***OVER.*** IT'LL BE IN AND OUT IN HALF AN HOUR.

PRESS

C'MON LOIS.

FINE. BUT HALF AN HOUR, STEVE. MY BUBBLE BATH AWAITS.

I DON'T QUITE BLACK OUT THIS TIME...BUT IT TAKES ME A MOMENT TO PULL MYSELF TOGETHER.

THE POOR GUY I LANDED ON IS OUT COLD. I DROP THE CHUTE AND STOW IT AND THEN I SEE ***THE CHOPPER.***

I POP MY ***SMOKE--***

AND THAT'S WHEN I SEE THE NORTH KOREAN SOLDIERS. I FUMBLE FOR MY SMALL-ARM...TRY TO REMEMBER HOW IT WORKS...SAFETY OFF... IS THAT IT? ***IS IT OFF?*** ...AM I GOING TO DIE?

I HEAR THE SLOSH OF MUD BEHIND ME--

AND THE SITUATION BECOMES EVEN MORE IMMEDIATE--***IT'S INSANE.*** THIS WAR IS OVER--HE EITHER DOESN'T KNOW IT--

--OR HE ***DOESN'T CARE.*** HE MEANS TO ***KILL ME.***

IS THE SAFETY OFF? OH GOD, ***WHY*** IS THIS HAPPENING? HE'S STRONG AS--THE CHOPPER-- ***WHERE'S THE CHOPPER?*** WAIT--***KOREAN!*** SPEAK TO HIM IN KOREAN!

YOU KNOW ENOUGH TO TELL HIM-- IT'S OVER--***IT'S***--

THOSE DUMB ***REDS*** DON'T KNOW THE WAR'S ***OVER!***

HEY KID, PASS ME ***TWO HAND GRENADES*** FROM THE CRATE AT YOUR FEET.

POW

POW

BR-BRRP!

LOIS, BE A DEAR AND OPEN THAT DOOR FOR ME WILL YOU?

IS THIS ***WISE?***

IT'S A BLOODY SHAME WE HAVE TO DO THIS--

POW!

BBRRRPP

BOOM

BUT I'LL BE DANGED IF THEY'RE GONNA KILL THAT BOY-- HE'S GOING HOME WITH US.

STOP! *STOP!* FOR GOD'S SAKE--

HRRRMMMPH!

MY MIND IS LOCKED IN A PANIC--*WHAT ARE THE WORDS?* KOREAN WORDS? NO TIME TO THINK--

NNNFF!

UUNNNF--

PLEASE--

PLEASE, *STOP*--

BAM

MY COUNTRY HAS GIVEN ME ***EVERYTHING.*** FREEDOM, OPPORTUNITY AND THE CHANCE TO ***FLY.*** I OWE MY COUNTRY ***MY LIFE.***

HURRY, JIMMY!

BUT I'VE NEVER FELT I OWE MY COUNTRY THE ***LIVES OF OTHERS.*** I HAD SWORN TO SERVE MY COUNTRY IN EVERY WAY I CAN ***BUT ONE.*** I HAVE NOT ***KILLED*** FOR MY COUNTRY.

IF ONLY THE KOREAN WORDS HAD COME TO ME--IF ONLY I'D BEEN STRONGER...ALL MY ***RIGHTEOUS POSTURING*** AND ***MORAL CODES...***

BRRRP

ALL OF IT NARROWED DOWN TO THIS FILTHY TRENCH, AND SOMETHING I'D NEVER CONSIDERED.

SURVIVAL.

HEY FLYBOY, LOIS LANE, NEWS CORRESPONDENT.

WHAT SAY YOU TELL MY READERS HOW IT FEELS TO CHEAT *CERTAIN DEATH?*

그것은넘어서이는.

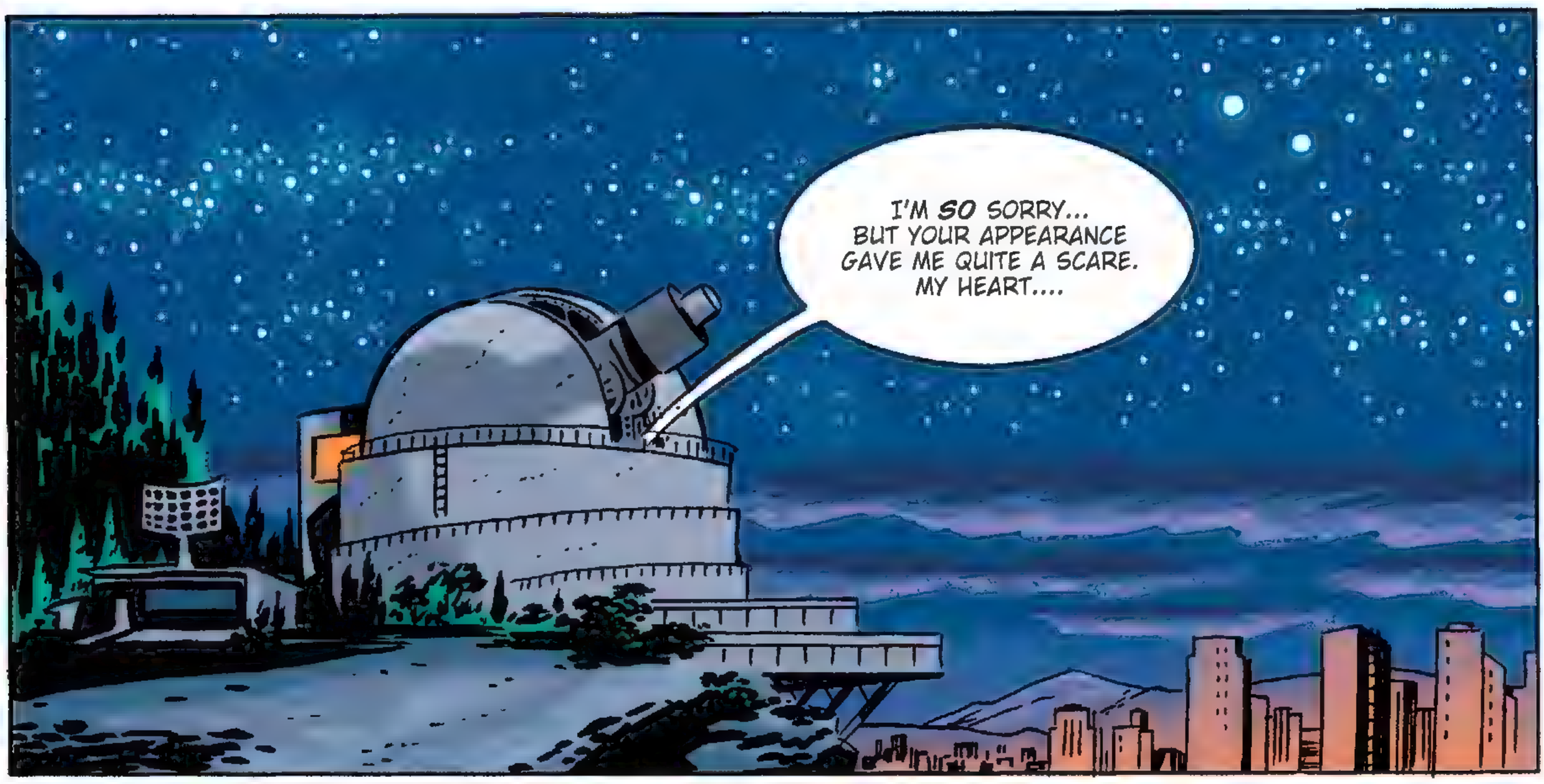
그것은넘어서이는.
전쟁을멈추십시요.

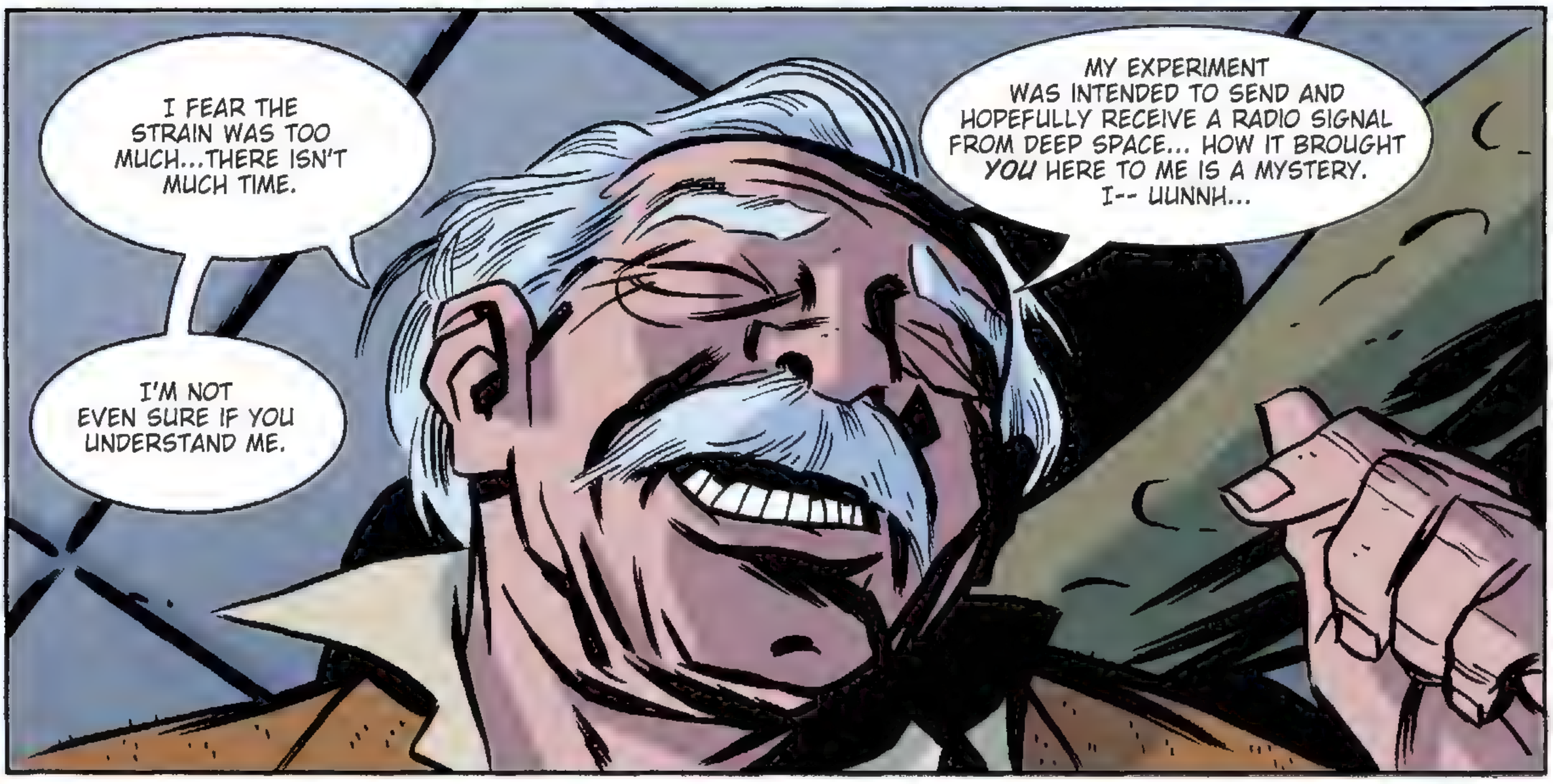
HUH?

IT'S KOREAN. HE SAID *IT'S OVER.*

IT'S OVER. MAKE WAR NO MORE.

CHAPTER FOUR
GODS AND MONSTERS





MY TIME IS ALMOST UP... THERE IS SO MUCH YOU NEED TO KNOW. YOU ***MUST*** BE ***VERY CAREFUL.***

THIS WORLD ISN'T READY FOR... YOU. MANKIND IS A SUSPICIOUS, VIOLENT CREATURE. YOU ***MUST NOT*** REVEAL YOURSELF.

I'M... I'M SORRY. WHOEVER YOU ARE... PLEASE....

FORGIVE ME.

SUPERMAN AND WONDER WOMAN EASE SUFFERING FOR INDO-CHINA

AMERICA OFFERS RELIEF TO WAR-TORN REGION

By Clark Kent

Fighting continues in the nation known as Indo-China. The French forces that govern the region have sustained heavy losses from rebel forces in the North, led by the charismatic Ho Chi Minh. It is believed that the Communist Russians and Chinese have been funding and arming the rebels, in an attempt to gain control over Indo-China and strengthen the Communist foothold in the Far East. UN condemnation has done nothing to ease the tensions between these two factions and the government has requested

"although we have no interest in becoming involved with the conflict in the East, we do feel a humanitarian responsibility to help those people whose lives are being destroyed by this conflict. To that end, both Superman and Wonder Woman are involved in relief efforts in Indo-China. This administration would like to stress that their mission is humanitarian, not military, in nature."

As the fighting escalates and the French position becomes more desperate, the question remains whether America is about to

PHOTO: James Olsen

WONDER WOMAN: Winning the hearts and minds of the disenfranchised.

HA HA
HA HA--

OY YAHHH--

...IT'S CALLED A TOAST...

HA HA HA--

I SUPPOSE IT WAS JUST A MATTER OF TIME BEFORE THEY SENT YOU.

YOU'VE GOT A LOT OF EXPLAINING TO DO.

FOR ONCE IN YOUR LIFE *KAL*- WHY DON'T YOU RELAX A BIT?

COME JOIN THE *CELEBRATION!*

CHAK

CHAK

TELL THEM THEY'D BE WASTING THEIR BULLETS.

KA-CHAK

DON'T JUDGE THEM, KAL. THEY GET A LITTLE NERVOUS AROUND MEN.

CHIK

<STAND DOWN LADIES. THIS IS THE MIGHTY SUPERMAN. HE WON'T HURT YOU.>

DIANA, WHAT IS GOING ON HERE? WHAT HAPPENED TO THOSE MEN BY THE RIVER?

YOU HAVEN'T REPORTED IN FOR OVER TWO WEEKS. WASHINGTON WANTS AN EXPLANATION.

YOU CAN TELL THEM I'M OVER HERE WINNING THE HEARTS AND MINDS OF THE DISENFRANCHISED.

DID THEY TELL YOU WHY I'M HERE KAL? I HAD BEEN SENT INTO CAMBODIA TO RETRIEVE A CRASHED C-47 TRANSPORT THAT HAD AN AMERICAN CREW.

THIS OF COURSE ***NEVER OFFICIALLY HAPPENED*** BECAUSE THERE AREN'T ANY AMERICANS OVER HERE, AND I'M ONLY INVOLVED IN HUMANITARIAN EFFORTS.

ON OUR WAY BACK TO LAOS, I NOTICED A SMALL CAMP AT THE MOUTH OF THE RIVER.

IT WAS A REBEL BASE IN TERRITORY THAT HAD BELONGED TO THE SOUTH LAST MONTH. BUT WHAT MADE MY BLOOD RACE WAS THE ***TIGER CAGES*** I SAW IN THE PADDY. LIKE A GOOD SOLDIER, I COMPLETED MY MISSION.

THAT EVENING I RETURNED TO THE CAMP. I DIDN'T ***HURT*** THEM. I SIMPLY ***DISARMED*** THEM.

AND THEN I OPENED THE TIGER CAGES. THESE WOMEN HAD BEEN LIVING LIKE THIS FOR WEEKS. NOTHING MORE THAN ANIMALS... SEXUAL CATTLE. THEY STOOD IN SILENCE, FACING THEIR TORMENTORS.

I HAD PLACED THE WEAPONS IN THE CLEARING. *THE CHOICE* WAS THEIRS.

THESE WOMEN DID THAT? AND... AND YOU STOOD BY AND WATCHED?

DIANA... HOW COULD YOU?

THESE WOMEN HAVE RECLAIMED THEIR HOME. AND THEIR DIGNITY. I HAVE CHOSEN TO TRAIN THEM TO SURVIVE THE COMING WAR. SURELY YOU SEE THE VIRTUE IN THAT.

BUT TO ALLOW COLD-BLOODED MURDER... AND THEN TO CELEBRATE.

YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO SET AN EXAMPLE!

WHAT, HAND THEM A SMILE AND A BOX OF FLAGS? THEIR FAMILIES, THEIR MATES... THEIR CHILDREN WERE MURDERED BEFORE THEIR EYES.

THIS IS CIVIL WAR. I'VE GIVEN THEM THEIR ***FREEDOM***, AND A CHANCE FOR ***JUSTICE***...

THE AMERICAN WAY!

I'M GOING TO HAVE TO REPORT THIS TO THE UNDERSECRETARY. WHAT YOU'VE DONE IS IN ***STRICT VIOLATION*** OF OUR PROTOCOL.

OF COURSE KAL. THE RULES ARE THE RULES. WE CAN'T GET INVOLVED, UNLESS IT'S SOME DIRTY ACT OF SABOTAGE THAT OUR GOVERNMENT SANCTIONS.

TAKE A GOOD LOOK AROUND. THERE ARE NO RULES HERE. JUST SUFFERING AND MADNESS. I WANT YOU TO GO BACK AND TELL YOUR UNDERSECRETARY THAT.

THERE'S THE DOOR SPACEMAN.

GOTHAM CITY- 1955

MY TELEPATHIC ABILITIES AND A THOROUGH EXAMINATION OF DR. ERDEL'S DEVICE LED TO THE CONCLUSION THAT I CANNOT RETURN TO MY MARTIAN HOMELAND. MY IMMEDIATE CONCERNS TURNED TO SURVIVAL AND CONCEALMENT.

COMPARED TO THESE "HUMAN" BEINGS, MY MARTIAN FORM WAS EXTEMELY POWERFUL. INVISIBILITY, FLIGHT, AND TELEPATHY WERE ADVANTAGES I HAD OVER THESE CREATURES, AND IN THAT KNOWLEDGE I WAS SECURE I WOULD BE ABLE TO SURVIVE.

AS A SHAPE-SHIFTER, I WAS ABLE TO ASSUME THE LIKENESS OF DR. ERDEL TO VENTURE INTO THIS STRANGE WORLD. HE HAD ENOUGH CURRENCY ON HIS PERSON FOR ME TO SECURE LODGINGS IN THIS GOTHAM CITY. THE ONLY THREAT THIS NEW WORLD AFFORDED ME WAS ELEMENTAL.

FIRE.

THE VERY SIGHT OF IT FILLS MY MARTIAN SOUL WITH DREAD.

FOR NOW I AM SAFE, BUT IF I CHOOSE TO TRY TO LIVE HERE, I WILL NEED TO KNOW MORE ABOUT THIS CURIOUS PLANET.

MY IMMEDIATE NEEDS FOR FOOD AND SHELTER HAD HELD BACK THE HEAVY TIDE OF GRIEF AND LOSS THAT NOW SURROUNDS ME. MY MEMORIES OF MY HOME PLANET ARE VAGUE AND DISTORTED. I CAN ONLY WONDER IF ERDEL'S DEVICE HAS DAMAGED THAT PART OF MY CONSCIOUSNESS.

PARTICLES OF RECOGNITION IN THE FORM OF SENSE MEMORIES FUEL MY SENSE OF DISLOCATION. TO LIFT THIS CONFUSED DARKNESS, I RESOLVE TO FOCUS ON THE NEW LIFE I AM CONFRONTED WITH.

THOSE ARE MY PRINCIPLES. IF YOU DON'T LIKE THEM, I HAVE OTHERS.

FOR SEVERAL WEEKS NOW, I HAVE BEEN STUDYING LIFE ON EARTH WITH THE HELP OF THIS CHARMING DEVICE THEY CALL THE TELEVISION. IT IS GIVING ME ALL THE INFORMATION I NEED TO ACT LIKE A TYPICAL CITIZEN OF THIS NATION CALLED AMERICA.

TONIGHT'S SHOW WILL RETURN AFTER THIS WORD FROM HOTSPOT SODA POP! YOU CAN'T GET ENOUGH HOTSPOT!

SO MANY TYPES OF PEOPLE... ANIMALS... AND THE FOODS! DELICIOUS, SWEET AND SAVORY FOODS UNLIKE ANYTHING ON MARS.

I INGEST THE NEWS PROGRAMS, CURRENT AFFAIRS AND THE POPULAR GAME SHOWS. EVEN BRILLIANT ACHIEVEMENTS IN ART THAT FEATURE FANTASTIC CREATURES CALLED "CARTOONS."

YOU'RE DISTHPICABLE!

TWO THINGS BECOME CLEAR TO ME. THE FIRST IS THAT THIS IS A WORLD WHERE GOOD AND EVIL STRUGGLE IN ALL LEVELS OF EXISTENCE. I WANT TO BE A FORCE FOR GOOD.

THE SECOND THING IS THAT I NEED TO FIND EMPLOYMENT IF I WANT TO OBTAIN ANY MORE CURRENCY.

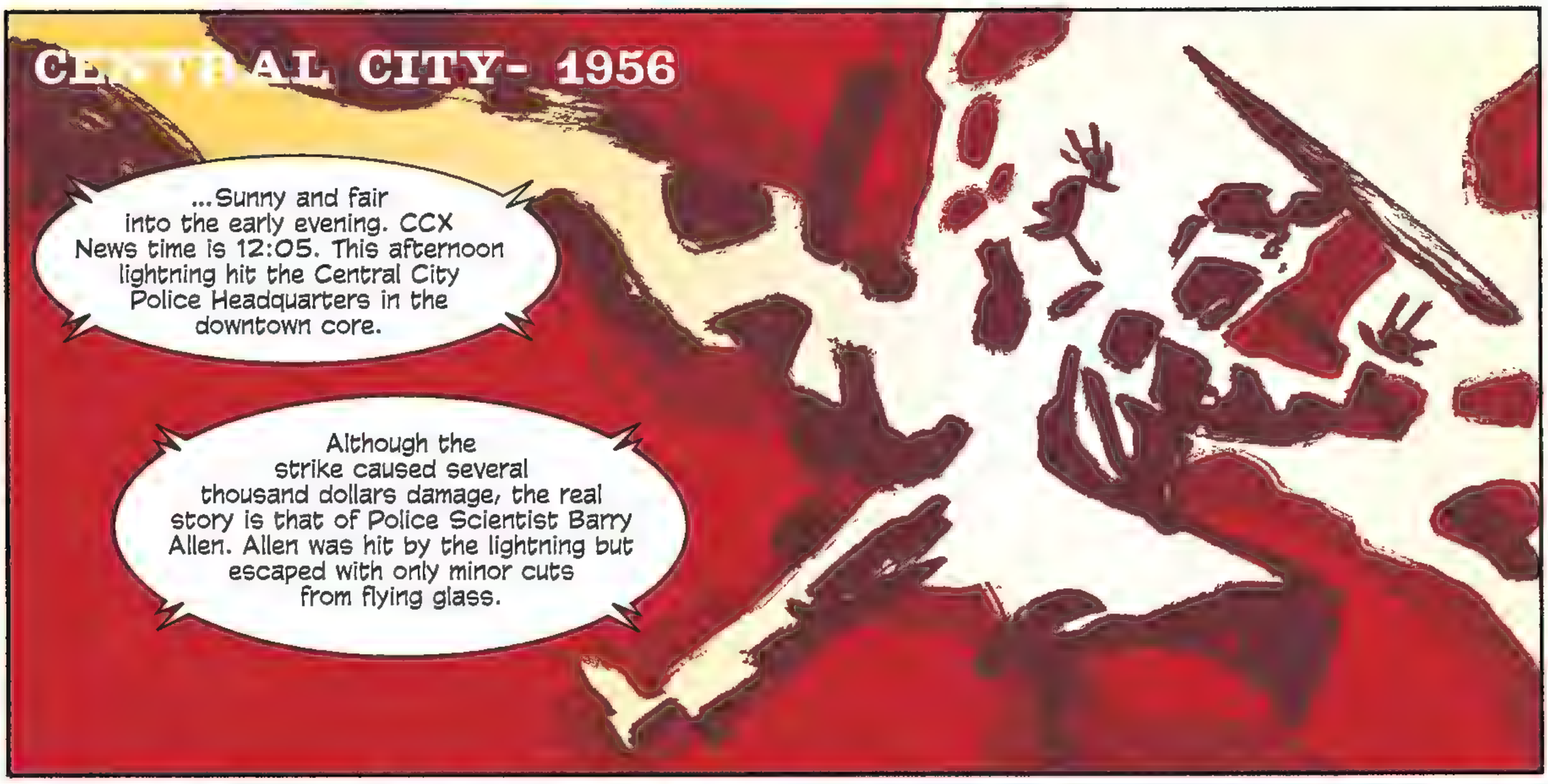
...CONCLUDES OUR BROADCASTING DAY...

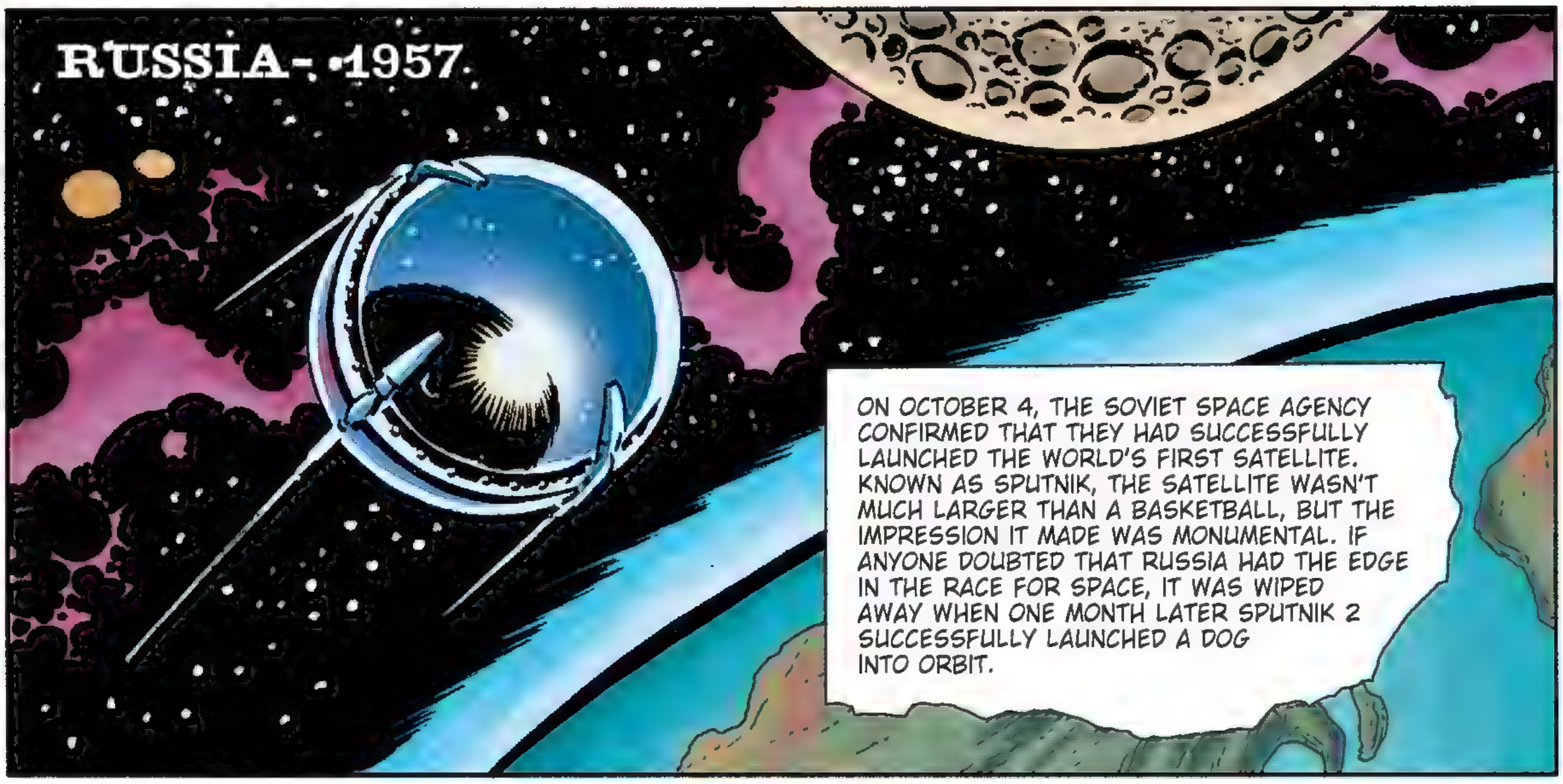
AS I'M SURE IS THE CASE FOR MANY EARTHLINGS, I FIND MY ANSWER ON THE TELEVISION.

TONIGHT, MIKE HAMMER MIXES IT UP WITH A DEADLY RING OF SABOTEURS!

MY MARTIAN NAME IS J'ONN J'ONZZ. HERE ON EARTH I SHALL BE KNOWN AS JOHN JONES.

POLICE DETECTIVE JOHN JONES. I'LL BE ONE OF THE GOOD GUYS.


CENTRAL CITY- 1956
...Sunny and fair into the early evening. CCX News time is 12:05. This afternoon lightning hit the Central City Police Headquarters in the downtown core.
Although the strike caused several thousand dollars damage, the real story is that of Police Scientist Barry Allen. Allen was hit by the lightning but escaped with only minor cuts from flying glass.


RUSSIA- 1957.
ON OCTOBER 4, THE SOVIET SPACE AGENCY CONFIRMED THAT THEY HAD SUCCESSFULLY LAUNCHED THE WORLD'S FIRST SATELLITE. KNOWN AS SPUTNIK, THE SATELLITE WASN'T MUCH LARGER THAN A BASKETBALL, BUT THE IMPRESSION IT MADE WAS MONUMENTAL. IF ANYONE DOUBTED THAT RUSSIA HAD THE EDGE IN THE RACE FOR SPACE, IT WAS WIPED AWAY WHEN ONE MONTH LATER SPUTNIK 2 SUCCESSFULLY LAUNCHED A DOG INTO ORBIT.

WASHINGTON- 1957-
EISENHOWER BEGINS HIS SECOND TERM AS PRESIDENT BY CONFIRMING AMERICA'S COMMITMENT TO STOPPING THE ADVANCE OF COMMUNISM IN THE FAR EAST. EISENHOWER ALSO PLEDGES MASSIVE FUNDING FOR AN AMERICAN SPACE PROGRAM TO MATCH THE RUSSIAN EFFORT.
VOICE OF AMERICA

ONE DAY YOU GO TO WORK LIKE EVERY OTHER DAY, BUT IT'S NOT EVERY OTHER DAY.

EVERYTHING CHANGES THAT DAY. IT COULD BE A RAISE. YOU COULD MEET YOUR SOUL MATE. OR YOU GET HIT BY LIGHTNING IN FRONT OF A CABINET OF CHEMICALS.

THE NEXT DAY, IT'S A WHOLE NEW LIFE. USE THE RAISE TO BUY THAT HOME. MARRY YOUR SOUL MATE. OR SURVIVE THE LIGHTNING BOLT TO DISCOVER YOU CAN RUN FASTER THAN ANYTHING ON EARTH.

AT LEAST I *THINK* I'M FASTER THAN ANYTHING ON EARTH. I'M HAVING A FEW PROBLEMS GOING PAST A CERTAIN FRICTION VERSUS VELOCITY RATIO.

IN OTHER WORDS, I NEED TO FIND SHOES THAT WON'T CATCH FIRE FROM THE EXTREME SPEED.

IN THE MEANTIME, LIKE I SAID, IT'S A WHOLE NEW LIFE.

AND I'VE GOT A FEW IDEAS ABOUT HOW I'M GOING TO LIVE IT.

Hey Jimmy. Double shot of Canadian Club with a Pabst. A rough night? Yeah Jimmy, you could say that. Y'know, every night I come in this bar and you tell me about the freaks YOU deal with.

GOTHAM CITY - 1997

Well, it's my turn, Jimmy. Another double. I swear, the damndest night I've ever spent. I was with a cop. Name's John Jones.

REPEAT, REQUEST BACKUP AT 14456 PARIS SQUARE. SOMEONE *PLEASE* RESPOND.

SAVE YOUR BREATH, JOHN. IT'S OBVIOUS THE FIX IS IN. SOMEONE *BOUGHT* THE COPS.

Y'see. that's John. It's all BLAST this and BY GOSH that. Corny as a comic book.

BLAST IT, SLAM, WHAT KIND OF WORLD IS THIS?

But it could be worse. Near as I can tell, John is the only honest cop in Gotham other than that new guy, Gordon.

BLAZES! I REALIZE THAT MY FELLOW COPS ARE ALL ON THE TAKE...

BUT THIS IS A CHILD'S LIFE!

The son of a prominent financier had been kidnapped. No note, no ransom demands, for five days now. John was the only real detective assigned to the case, and sensing the cops were less than enthusiastic, the kid's dad hired me. John and I ended up pooling our efforts.

LIFE IS CHEAP IN THIS TOWN, JOHN. YOU SHOULD KNOW THAT BY NOW.

I KNOW. IT'S JUST... DIFFERENT WHERE I'M FROM.

So John, who looks just like one a' them movie detectives by the way, he calls me tonight. He's located the kid, and we have to act fast. John's like that. He has these half-assed "hunches" and "sources" that are never wrong.

So now he's positive the kid's in this church and we haven't a moment to lose. How John finds all this crap out is a mystery to me, but here I am charging along behind him.

WATCH THE RHUBARB, JOHN!

KRUNKH!

What the hell does this guy eat? He plowed through that oak door like it was a Japanese screen. If there's anyone inside they know we're here now.

The front of the church is empty but muffled sounds reach toward us through the darkness.

THERE'S NO TIME FOR BEING *CUTE* BRADLEY. THAT KID'S ON THE *HOTSEAT!*

I want to argue but it's all I can do to keep up with the corny maniac.

We round a column and there it is.

It's the kind of scene you have to take in for a second--

A Catholic church filled with rejects from the Saturday matinee. They'd be laughable if it wasn't for the weapons and sheer numbers. And holding his own in the eye of this storm is the vigilante.

The so-called Batman.

Like I said a thousand times, only in Gotham City. But I will admit this--

The nancy outfit aside, this guy fought like the Devil himself.

A brace of weirdos rush me as my eyes race around the cathedral looking for the boy. The mass of men in front of the cross tumble down the stairs--

And there he is.

JOHN! THE KID'S ON THE CROSS! GET TO THE KID! *JOHN!! WHERE ARE YOU?*

Then I see John-- how did he get up there so fast? I'm not sure what happened next--

It looked like John was suddenly poleaxed from behind.

He went stiff as a board and his eyes near popped out of his head--

Great. Now the church is on fire too.

What the hell is wrong with John?

SOMEONE ***SNAP OUT OF IT!*** HE'S GONNA KNIFE THE KID!

JOHN!

FOR GOD'S SAKE JOHN, *GET UP!*

MMMPH!

YOU ARE THE TRIBUTE! WITHOUT THE ***CENTRE***, ALL MUST FALL AWAY! YOURS IS THE GLORY OF ***NOURISHING*** THE CENTRE'S ***STRENGTH.***

YOURRRRK--

AAAAAAAAAAAAAAA

AA-KKK

Now you know me. I've seen my share of hard candy. I was a jarhead in the Pacific. There was even a time I collected for the juice man to make ends meet.

But this-- this bat-guy. he made my blood run cold. The look on his face-- the sounds that came out of the creep underneath him.

This bat-guy.... well, he scared the bejeezus out of me.

It's the sound of the wrists breaking that finally does it. The remaining freaks run blubbering into the shadows.

I'm pinned there, like a moth on a board, unable to look away.

JOHN! CAN YOU HEAR ME? JOHN, ARE YOU OKAY?
SOMEONE CLIP YOU FROM BEHIND?
CLIP ME? UHHH... YES THAT MUST BE IT. I THINK I'LL BE FINE IN A MOMENT.
NOOO!! STAY AWAY! STAY AWAY!!!
WHY DON'T YOU CRAWL BACK INTO YOUR HOLE, FREAK? WE'LL CALL YOU NEXT HALLOWE'EN.
IT'S OKAY SON, YOU'RE SAFE NOW.

LET'S GET THIS POOR KID HOME AND-- WHAT'CHA GOT THERE?

SOME SORT OF BOOK... IT'S LOCKED.

And that's John, see? Cults, kidnapped kids, beatings and even a sighting of the Batman... and he's mooning over a friggin' book.

CAN'T OPEN IT. I'LL BET THERE'S A CLUE OF SOME SORT WITHIN THESE PAGES.

THE CENTRE... HEE HEE HEE.

SHUT UP, FRUITCAKE. YOU'RE SCARIN' THE KID.

YOU SWINE WILL BE JUDGED AS WELL...

WITHOUT THE CENTRE, THERE IS NO HOLDING!

And that, was how I spent my evening. Jeez, that guy gave me the creeps. And that bat-guy-- he just vanished. Anyway, I could use another. Pour yourself one, Jimmy.

CHAPTER FIVE
FUN CITY

AND LATE IN THE SEVENTH ROUND, THE CHAMP IS DEFINITELY SHOWING SIGNS OF TIRING.

AT 38, HE'S 12 YEARS OLDER THAN THE CONTENDER. OH! TWO SHARP JABS TAG THE CHAMP BUT HE COUNTERS WITH A STIFF RIGHT. THE CHAMP TAKES THE FIGHT TO HIM AND THEY EXCHANGE BLOWS ON THE ROPES. THIS YOUNG CHALLENGER IS INCREDIBLY FAST!

CLAY CONTINUES TO PEPPER THE CHAMP WITH SCORING COMBINATIONS, WORKING THE CUT OVER THE CHAMP'S RIGHT EYE.

AND WHOA! THE CHAMP LANDS ONE SQUARELY ON HIS JAW, GIVING THE YOUNG TITAN A MOMENT'S PAUSE. WILDCAT GRANT MOVES IN FOR THE KILL...

THE CONTENDER STEPS INTO IT, FEINTS--

HE NAILS THE CHAMP WITH AN EXPLOSIVE RIGHT CROSS!

WHAT A FIGHT LADIES AND GENTLEMEN!! WHO'DA THUNKIT?

UNBELIEVABLE! THE WILDCAT HITS THE CANVAS!

CLAY HAS KNOCKED DOWN THE CHAMP!

ONE!

IT LOOKS BAD FOR THE CHAMP, SPORTS FANS!

TWO!

THREE!

FOUR!

THE CHAMP IS DOWN AND IT LOOKS LIKE HE MAY BE OUT. HEAVEN ONLY KNOWS WHAT'S GOING THROUGH WILDCAT GRANT'S MIND RIGHT NOW!

FIVE!

SIX!

SEVEN!

EIGHT!

DING

IRONKITE

HUH?... WUZZAT LADIES?

UNBELIEVABLE, SPORTS FANS! WILDCAT GRANT IS SAVED BY THE BELL!

C'MON CHAMP, ***SNAP OUT OF IT!*** THIS KID IS KILLING YOU.

C'MON GUYS, WHAT'RE Y'DOIN'? I'M OKAY, SEE? LET'S GO SWIMMING.

WILDCAT

SURE CHAMP, SURE THING. BUT FIRST, LET'S ***WAKEY WAKEY.***

PPPFFFFNAAAA!!

CHAMP??

HOW MANY FINGERS CHAMP?

HE DON' LOOK SO GOOD.

WHAT DO YOU THINK, SELINA?

IT MIGHT BE TIME FOR *PLAN B*, DINAH.

WELL, BRUCE, YOUR PAL IS NO SHRINKING VIOLET.

THAT'S OLLIE FOR YOU, LOIS.

C'MON CHAMP! WAKE UP AND FINISH THIS BUM!

TOLD YOU, ACE! LOOKS LIKE YOU OWE ME A TWENTY SPOT.

WE'LL SEE, SMART GUY. THE CHAMP ISN'T FINISHED YET.

I THINK I'M FINISHED.

THIS KID IS THE BEST FIGHTER I'VE EVER SEEN. WAS I EVER THAT YOUNG AND FAST? I'LL NEVER LAST ANOTHER ROUND.

THIS KID IS GONNA BEAT ME UNLESS I CAN COME UP WITH SOMETHING.

IT'S TIME I STOPPED THINKING ABOUT THIS AS BOXING. TIME FOR PLAN B.

PING!

AND THERE'S THE BELL. BOTH FIGH-- WHAT THE HECK?

THE CHAMP IS RUNNING AT THE CHALLENGER AND SCREAMING LIKE A MADMAN!

SON OF A...

...MOST UNBELIEVABLE THING...

WHAT IS HE *DOING?*

MY GOD SELINA, TED'S FINALLY LOST HIS MIND.

RELAX DINAH! I BELIEVE THAT THIS IS WHAT TED REFERS TO AS *PLAN B.*

2298

THIS KID MAY BE THE BEST BOXER IN THE WORLD, BUT BOXING ISN'T THE ONLY REASON I'VE GOT THE BELT.

NO MATTER HOW ROUGH THIS GETS, IT'S STILL JUST A MATCH...A SPORT. I KNOW WHAT IT TAKES TO WIN WHEN YOU'RE DOWN. I KNOW HOW TO FIGHT WHEN IT'S LIFE OR DEATH.

I ONCE SWAM TWO MILES WITH THREE BULLETS IN MY LUNG. I KO'D THE ULTRA-HUMANITE IN ONE PUNCH.

WHAM!

I'M TED FRIGGIN' WILDCAT GRANT.

THIS IS MY FIGHT. THESE ARE MY PEOPLE.

AND TONIGHT, FOR ONE LAST TIME, I AM THEIR CHAMPION.

12

13

14

--FLY ME TO THE MOON
AND PEOPLE NEVER THINK ABOUT THIS, BUT THESE THINGS HAVE TO BE *TESTED.*
SO THERE I AM, TEN MILES UP IN AN UNTESTED PARACHUTE AND THE PILOT *STALLS* THE JET!
House Phones
YOU MUST BE ONE OF THE *BRAVEST* MEN IN THE WORLD.
IT'S ODD...
OR *STUPIDEST.* HARD TO TELL.

...I WAS TALKING TO ALAN SCOTT EARLIER.

TED'S OLD JSA PALS WERE HERE, BUT THEY DUCKED EARLY SO AS NOT TO RUIN TED'S NIGHT.

WELL, THEY MAY NOT BE GOOD AMERICANS. BUT AT LEAST THEY'VE A SENSE OF DECORUM.

HERE WE GO OLLIE. STRAIGHT FROM THE SUPERMAN'S MOUTH TO LOIS LANE'S TYPEWRITER.

HA! YEAH LOIS, WHAT'S WITH YOU LATELY?

WHETHER YOU AGREE WITH SUPERMAN OR NOT, *AT LEAST* HE'S STANDING FOR WHAT HE BELIEVES IN, WHICH IS MORE THAN YOU TWO *SPOILED BOYS* CAN SAY.

BRUCE?

BRUCE WAYNE? IS THAT YOU?

BRUCE *DARLING.* IT'S BEEN AGES. I'D LIKE YOU TO MEET A TRUE BLUE AMERICAN HERO. COLONEL RICK FLAGG.

NICE TO MEET YOU, WAYNE.

THE PLEASURE'S MINE, FLAGG. AND CAROL, YOU'RE AS DARLING AS EVER. HAVE YOU TWO MET LOIS LANE?

YES, I KNOW *DARLING* MISS FERRIS AND *MISTER* FLAGG.

AND THIS IS OLLIE QUE-- WELL, WHAT A ***SURPRISE.*** IT SEEMS MR. QUEEN IS HEADING FOR GREENER PASTURES. IT CAN'T BE THE COMPANY.

DOWN GIRL. YOU'LL HAVE TO EXCUSE LOIS... IF SHE ISN'T ARGUING ABOUT POLITICS, SHE SIMPLY ISN'T HAPPY.

NO OFFENSE. BUT I AGREE WITH YOU, WAYNE. WE'RE HERE TONIGHT BECAUSE OF THE MATCH.

THE CHAMP WAS SOMETHING, WASN'T HE?

SPEAK OF THE DEVIL.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, I'M PROUD TO PRESENT THE WORLD'S HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION.

CHEERS TO THE ***KING OF THE CATS!***

HE'S THIS CAT'S KING. MMM.

HUBBA HUBBA.

CENTRAL CITY

THE DUMONT NETWORK WILL RETURN TO *"THE JOHNNY THUNDER SHOW"* AFTER THESE NETWORK MESSAGES.

DUMONT

Johnny Thunder

TOMORROW EVENING THE DUMONT NETWORK PROUDLY PRESENTS...

"HEROES"! THE EXCITING *NEW* SHOW, BROADCAST *LIVE* FROM THE ED SULLIVAN THEATRE IN MANHATTAN.

BRRRING!

UUUUHH YELLO.

HELLO, BARRY?

IRIS BABY! I WAS JUST CLEANING THE KITCHEN AND THINKING HOW MUCH I MISS YOU... HOW'S VEGAS?

TOMORROW, "HEROES" FEATURES NOT ONE, BUT FOUR OF AMERICA'S BEST AND BRIGHTEST! RED RYAN, THE WORLD'S GREATEST--

ITS SO... WELL, GLITZY. BUT THE MAGAZINE ***NEEDS*** TO KNOW WHAT YOUNG RICH WOMEN WEAR TO PUBLIC BEATINGS.

DID YOU MEET THE CHAMP? WHAT'S HE LIKE?

HE'S ACTUALLY VERY SWEET. I HAD HIM AUTOGRAPH A PROGRAM FOR YOU. I CAN'T WAIT TO GET BACK AN...

AAAHHHH!

POOM

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN.

I'M *VERY* *SORRY* TO INTERRUPT YOUR EVENING'S FESTIVITIES...

BUT HONESTLY-- AM I THE ONLY ONE WHO HATED THAT TALENTLESS WARBLER?

IRIS! WHAT'S GOING ON?

OMIGOD BARRY! IT'S THAT LUNATIC FROM THE NEWS LAST YEAR... CAPTAIN COLD!

--HAVE NO DESIRE TO ROB OR HARM ANY OF YOU DARLINGS. SIMPLY--

YOU THERE! THE *NAUGHTY* GIRL ON THE TELEPHONE!

OH PLEASE NO! *DON'T SHOOT ME!* I'LL--

BARRY! *BARRY!* HE SEES ME, HE--

POOM!

LET THAT BE A LESSON TO THE REST OF YOU FINE PEOPLE. IF YOU SIMPLY--

IRIS! HONEY WHAT IS IT? *WHAT'S HAPPENING?*

IRIS?

WHERE IS THAT RING?

I WAIT UNTIL I'M CLEAR OF THE CITY LIMITS BEFORE I HIT THE SOUND BARRIER.

THAT'S ONE I FIGURED OUT THE HARD WAY A FEW TIMES. ***FLYING GLASS*** AND ***PEDESTRIANS*** DON'T MIX.

I REALLY CRANK IT UP WHEN I HIT THE OPEN ROAD.

INCREDIBLE. AT THIS SPEED, I VIBRATE MY ATOMS AT A FREQUENCY THAT ALLOWS PESKY THINGS LIKE BUGS AND TELEPHONE POLES TO PASS THROUGH MY MASS. IT'S LIKE COMING PURPOSEFULLY UNGLUED AS YOU'RE ***SHOT*** FROM A HIGH CALIBER RIFLE.

I'M A SWARM OF ATOMS ROCKETING TOWARDS THE ONE THING I CAN'T LIVE WITHOUT. THE REASON I KEEP MY IDENTITY SECRET.

MY IRIS. MY DARLING WOMAN. IF SHE WAS EVER HURT BECAUSE OF MY... NIGHT JOB, I COULD NEVER FORGIVE MYSELF.

FINALLY... IT FELT LIKE ***FOREVER*** TO GET HERE...

YOU DARLINGS JUST SIT TIGHT. ALL WE WANT IS THE FIGHT GATE, AND WE ALREADY HAVE THAT. WE'LL BE GONE BEFORE YOU KNOW IT.

LOOK AT THIS CLOWN. Y'KNOW HIGHBALL, IF I WAS TO DISTRACT HIM YOU COULD PROB'LY GET THE JUMP ON THIS LOSER.

TAKE IT EASY PAPPY.

THERE'S NO NEED FOR ANYONE ELSE TO GET HURT. LET'S WAIT AND LET THE COPS HANDLE THIS.

HAL'S RIGHT.

AH, THERE'S OUR RIDE NOW. RELAX PEOPLE. YOU'LL BE BACK TO HAVING THE CROOKS WHO OWN THIS DUMP FLEECING YOU IN NO TIME.

I GEAR DOWN AS I HIT THE STRIP AND DO A TIGHT RECON OF THE HOTEL FROM THE OUTSIDE IN. IT LOOKS LIKE COLD IS ALONE IN THERE.

THEN I SEE HER. MY IRIS BABY.

SHE'S OKAY! JUST UNCONSCIOUS. I GIVE HER HAND A QUICK THAW...

I GRAB A LITTLE SUGAR...

AND NOW FOR THE TOUGH GUY WHO SHOOTS AT WOMEN.

I REALLY SLOW IT DOWN NOW. NOT FOR ANY SAFETY REASON. I WANT THIS JERK TO SEE ME COMING.

SSSSSSSSS

STTTOOO

OOPPPP!

MAKE IT FAST.

HOLY SMOKE! PAPPY, IT'S THAT SUPER-SPEEDY GUY FROM CENTRAL CITY. THE... THE...

THE FLASH. HOW ABOUT THIS GUY, HAL? HE CAN RUN FASTER THAN AN X-2. THE BOYS AT EDWARDS COULDN'T KEEP HIM ON THE RADAR! THIS SHOULD BE ***FUN.***

I DON'T KNOW WHY YOU PLAGUE ME SO, NOR DO I CARE.

YOU WILL IN A SECOND, LIBERACE.

I SUGGEST YOU HEAR ME OUT. I TOOK ***PRECAUTIONS*** IN CASE YOU... DROPPED BY. IF YOU TOUCH ME, YOU'LL TRIGGER SIX CYROGENIC BOMBS I'VE PLANTED AROUND THE CITY. IF YOU DON'T FIND THEM, THEY'LL GO OFF IN THIRTY SECONDS ANYWAY.

THEY LOOK LIKE THIS.

YOUR CHOICE. ***ME...*** OR THE CITY AND ***EVERYONE*** IN IT.

TWENTY-EIGHT SECONDS. HA! AND *THAT* TAKES CARE OF THE BOY SCOUT.

UTOPIA

Sonic Cadillac

I THANK YOU KIND PEOPLE FOR YOUR INDULGENCE AND BID YOU GOOD NIGHT.

THAT MAN THE FLASH IS NO BETTER THAN CAPTAIN COLD. HE'S A ***FEDERAL CRIMINAL.***

WELL, AT LEAST WE AGREE ON THAT, MISS LANE. THE LAST THING WE NEED IS PEOPLE LOOKING UP TO MASKED VIGILANTES.

COLONEL FLAGG, IF YOU INSIST--

NOW, NOW SELINA, THIS MAN IS OUR GUEST.

YOU'RE ENTITLED TO YOUR OPINION, FLAGG. THIS IS STILL AMERICA, RIGHT? BOY, I WISH MY BUDDY JAY WAS HERE.

HE SURE WOULD'VE LOVED TO HAVE SEEN THIS.

ONE.

TWO.

THREE.

FOUR.

FIVE.

WHERE?

WHERE?

WHERE IS THE SIXTH BOMB? AFTER SEARCHING EVERY INCH OF LAS VEGAS THREE TIMES IT HITS ME--

THERE IS NO SIXTH BOMB. COLD KNEW I'D FIND WHATEVER HE HID IN LESS THAN A FEW SECONDS. THE ONLY WAY TO KEEP ME OUT OF THE PICTURE IS TO HAVE ME ON A WILD GOOSE CHASE.

I DEAL WITH THE BOMBS.

NOW TO DEAL WITH COLD.

IF THERE'S ONE THING I CAN'T DO, IT'S FLY.

TOP

Exit

15

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2306

BUT SHEER VELOCITY, COUPLED WITH MY VIBRATING TRICK OUGHT TO MAKE UP FOR MY LACK OF WINGS.

JUST THROUGH THE GLASS...

AND I'VE GOT HIM COLD.

OOOPS. WRONG FREQUENCY! THE WINDOW--

--COMES WITH ME. I DISABLE THE CHOPPER AND YANK THE GOOD CAPTAIN OUT INTO THE NIGHT SKY.

GGAAAHHH!

ALGEBRA. PHYSICS. GEOMETRY AND TRIG. BEING A SCIENTIST MAKES IT A HELL OF A LOT EASIER TO HIT THE WATER INSTEAD OF THE PAVEMENT.

SPLOOSH!

WHY?
WHY? GOD
HELP ME
WHY?

WWHHRRR

I CAME TO
THIS DESERT TO
GET AWAY FROM YOU.
NO MORE CENTRAL CITY
FOR CAPTAIN COLD!
BUT THAT'S NOT
ENOUGH--

THE ICER!
IT'S OVERLOADING!
YOU BASTARD, WHAT
HAVE YOU DONE
TO ME?

RRRR

DON'T EVER MESS WITH MY IRIS.

PP PP POOM!

THEN SOMETHING MAGICAL HAPPENS. COLD'S BOMBS DETONATE HIGH IN THE EVENING SKY.

AND FOR A FEW MINUTES, IT'S SNOWING IN THE DESERT. THE OTHER FOLKS, THEY CAN'T SEE ME, BUT I'M THERE, VIBRATING JUST OUT OF THEIR VISION.

I'M THERE WITH THEM, AND IT'S SOMETHING TO SEE.

UHHH, HAL...

WHAT'D I TELL YOU, PAPPY? IT'S SIMPLY A MATTER OF MAINTAINING A SPEED THAT CREATES SUFFICIENT G'S AND THIS DANG 'VETTE CAN DRIVE UP WALLS!

ALL RIGHT! *ALL RIGHT!* I BELIEVE YOU!

WORRIED ABOUT YOUR HEART, PAPPY?

OKAY, WE'LL DO IT THE BORING WAY. PROBABLY BEST TO STRAIGHTEN UP AND FLY RIGHT.

ROGER THAT. THE MP'S HERE HAVE *NO* SENSE OF HUMOR.

YOU ARE NOW ENTERING THE
NEVADA TEST SITE
NO TRESPASSING
BY ORDER OF THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

NELLIS AIR FORCE BASE

MAN OH MAN ACE, THAT'S SOME PIECE OF EQUIPMENT!

B-47 PROTOTYPE CUSTOMIZED TO SEAT FOUR.

THE TV SHOW WANTS ME TO FLY CROSS-COUNTRY AND PICK THE OTHER THREE GUESTS UP AS PART OF THE PUBLICITY.

CAN YOU IMAGINE ME ON TV?

SURE CAN PAPPY. YOU'LL BE FAMOUS AS UNCLE MILTIE.

SPEAKING OF FAMOUS, I CAN'T GET OVER THAT FLASH GUY.

THAT WAS SOMETHING, EH? DID YOU ***SEE*** THAT GUY MANEUVER? WHAT I WOULDN'T GIVE TO FEEL THAT SPEED.

THANKS FOR HAVING ME DOWN FOR THIS, PAPPY. IT'S BEEN A GIGGLE.

WELL, I GOTTA SAY HAL, YOU'VE BEEN IN THE DUMPS LATELY. THOUGHT YOU COULD USE SOME CHEERING UP.

IT'S THAT OBVIOUS? IT'S JUST THAT SINCE THE WAR I'M HAVING TROUBLE FITTING IN.

I'VE ALWAYS HAD TO PUSH THE LIMITS BUT WHEN I GOT DISCHARGED FROM THE VA HOSPITAL IT JUST GOT WORSE.

YOU KNOW THIS STUFF... TESTING PARACHUTES, EJECTOR SEATS, ANYTHING. THE MORE ***DANGEROUS***, THE BETTER.

YOU REMEMBER THAT TTX DUAL JET FROM LAST SPRING? THERE WAS SOME DESIGN FLAW TO THE PLANE.

EIGHT PILOTS BOUGHT THE FARM TRYING TO RIDE THAT DEATHTRAP. WE HAD PICKED NUMBERS. FOR EIGHT WEEKS STRAIGHT A MAN WOULD GO UP, AND THAT PLANE WOULD KILL HIM. I WAS NUMBER NINE. YOU'D THINK WATCHING A MAN DIE EVERY TIME THEY TESTED THAT PLANE WOULD SCARE ME OR GIVE ME PAUSE...

BUT IT DIDN'T. I CLIMBED INTO THAT CRATE AND RODE HER ALL THE WAY TO NEXT WEDNESDAY. AND HEY ACE, DON'T GET ME WRONG. I'M NOT BRAGGING. I'M WORRIED. I THINK THERE'S A PIECE OF ME MISSING, MAYBE.

105

Y'KNOW HIGHBALL, IT SOUNDS TO ME LIKE YOU'RE *PUNISHING* YOURSELF.

WHAT?

C'MON PAPPY... THAT'S...

...THAT'S RIDICULOUS.

Y'KNOW PAPPY, MY WHOLE LIFE, MY DREAM HAS BEEN SIMPLE. SINCE I CAN REMEMBER, I'VE KNOWN I WAS GOING TO FLY. I WAS GOING TO SEE THE STARS.

SOMETIMES IT FEELS LIKE I WAS CLOSER THEN THAN I AM NOW. AFTER KOREA I... WELL, I GUESS I'M ***DAMAGED GOODS.*** I'LL NEVER BE AT THE TOP OF THE PYRAMID.

ALL I'M GOOD FOR IS TESTING FLYING BARBECUES AND PARACHUTES.

PAPPY, DO YOU EVER THINK ABOUT THE MEN YOU KILLED?

NOT OFTEN, HAL.

DOESN'T IT *HAUNT* YOU? I MEAN, THEY'RE *GONE.* BECAUSE OF YOU.

NOT BECAUSE OF ME. BECAUSE OF WAR. BECAUSE OF CIRCUMSTANCE. HAL, I BELIEVED IN WHAT WE DID OVER THERE.

YOU KNOW I'M NOT ONE OF THOSE FLAG WAVING SIMPLETONS, BUT I DO BELIEVE A FREE WORLD IS WORTH FIGHTING FOR. THE MEN I'VE KILLED...

I LIKE TO THINK OF THEM AS SOLDIERS, WHO BELIEVED IN WHAT THEY WERE FIGHTING FOR. HONORABLE MEN. YOU UNDERSTAND?

I GUESS SO. SORRY TO BRING ON THE *GLOOM,* PAPPY.

ANYWAY, ENOUGH OF THAT. SO YOU'RE OFF TO NEW YORK TO BECOME A TV STAR. SAVE ME A STARLET OR TWO WILL YA?

SPEAKING OF BEAUTIFUL WOMEN, THERE WAS SOMEONE AT THE CASINO TONIGHT I WANTED YOU TO MEET. BUT THE ROBBERY AND ALL-- WE MISSED EACH OTHER.

NO KIDDING. DECIDE TO SAVE HER FOR YOURSELF?

NAH, BUT YOU'VE GOT A MEETING WITH HER NEXT WEEK. ABOUT ***A JOB.*** MIGHT'VE HEARD OF HER. NAME'S CAROL FERRIS.

CAROL FERRIS? AS IN ***FERRIS*** AIRCRAFT? PAPPY YOU'RE KIDDING, RIGHT?

HA! TAKE IT EASY, HIGHBALL.

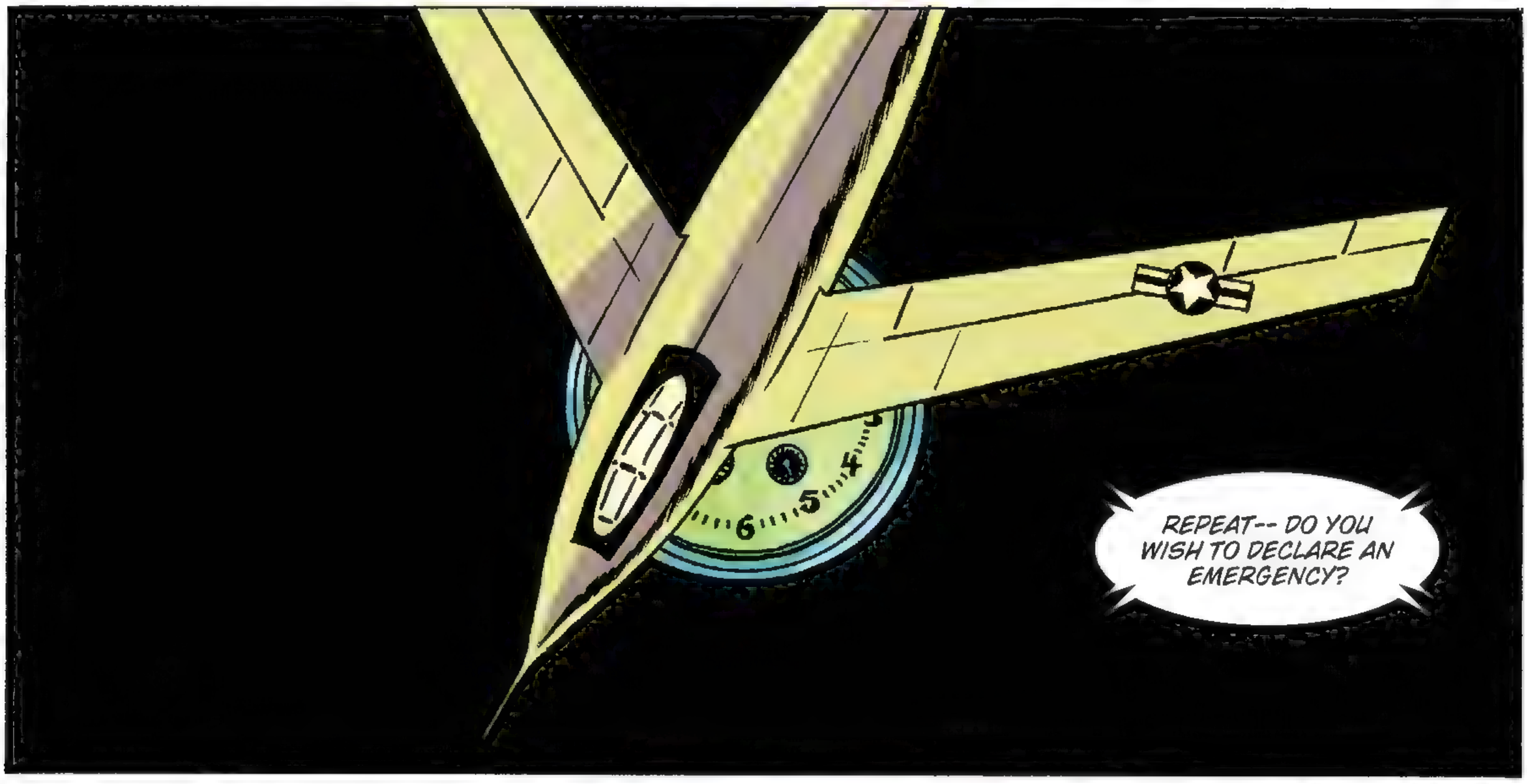
FERRIS! Y'KNOW, MY POP USED TO FLY FOR OLD MAN FERRIS--

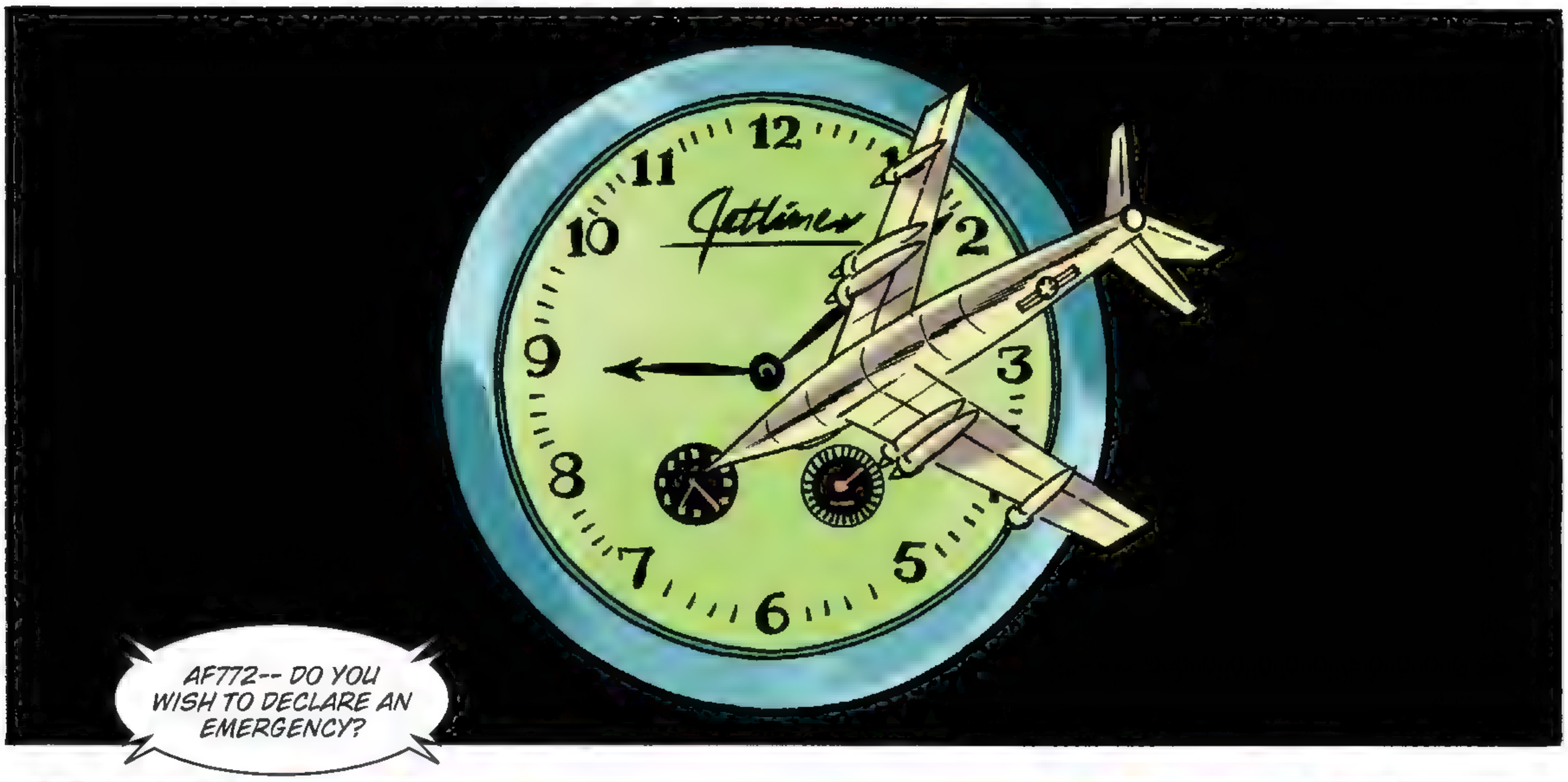
THIS IS ***INCREDIBLE!*** PAPPY, I PROMISE I WON'T LET YOU DOWN. MAN, FERRIS AIRCRAFT. MAYBE I ***WILL*** MAKE IT TO THE TOP OF THAT OLD PYRAMID!

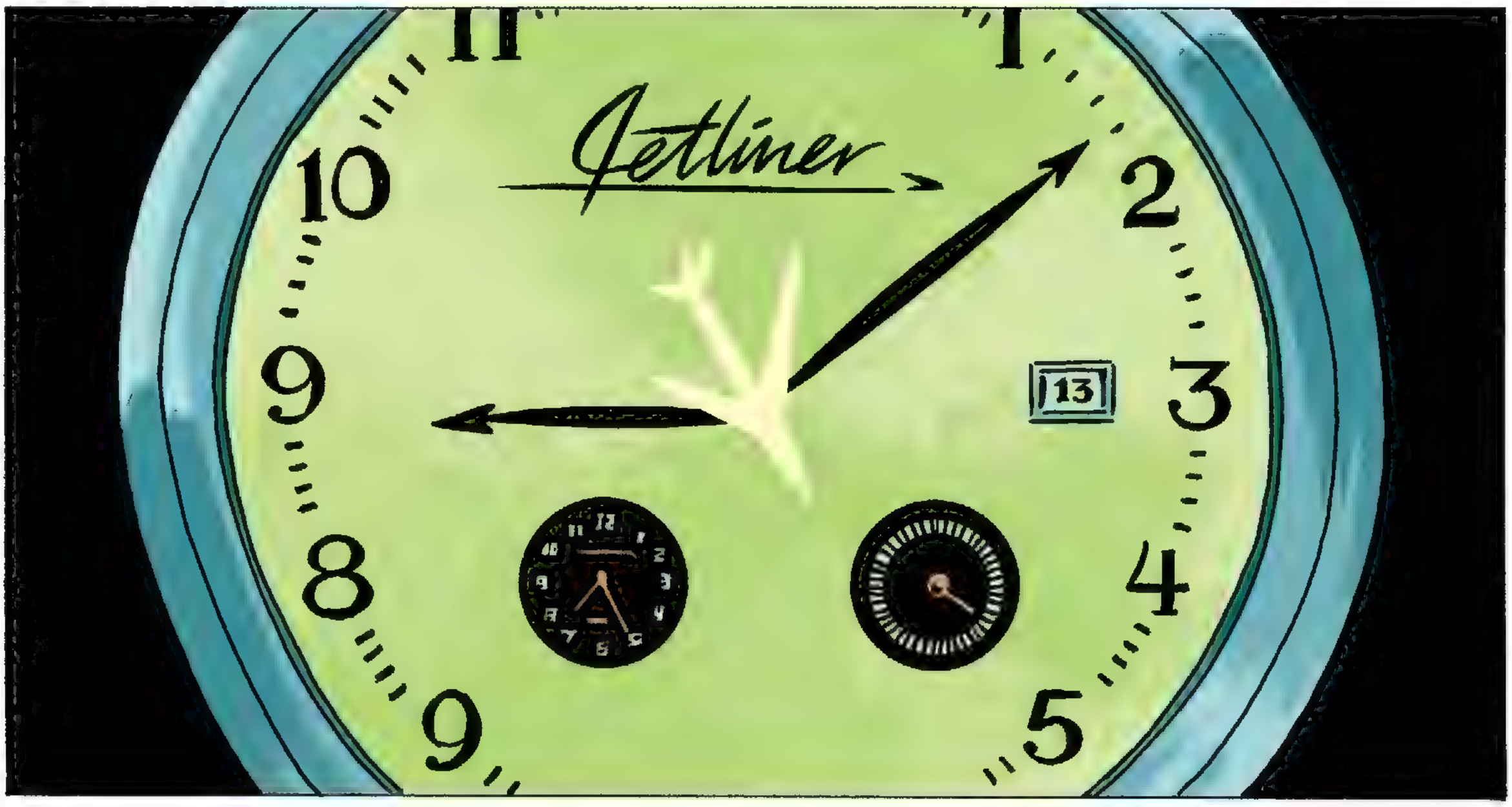
SHE'S READY COLONEL.

YOU ***KNOCK 'EM DEAD*** IN NEW YORK MR. HERO. HAPPY LANDINGS!

HAPPY LANDINGS KID.


REPEAT-- DO YOU WISH TO DECLARE AN EMERGENCY?


Jetliner
AF772-- DO YOU WISH TO DECLARE AN EMERGENCY?


Jetliner
13

AF772, THIS IS COLORADO TOWER, DO YOU READ?

DO YOU WISH TO DECLARE AN EMERGENCY?

DECLARE, *DECLARE*--

BEWARE

PREPARE

DECLARE YOUR SCARE OF THE BIG FAT BEAR--

DECLARE MY NEED FOR EXOTIC ECLAIR!

FOR I FEAR I HAVEN'T A MOMENT TO SPARE.

GAAAAAAAA

GAAAAAAAA--

IT IS OKAY BABY-- IT IS JUST THE DREAM AGAIN, NO?

CHAPTER SIX

THE MEN WHO FELL TO EARTH

MONTREAL- 1957

EVERY NIGHT SINCE *IT* HAPPENED.

EVERY NIGHT I WAKE UP *NOT* DEAD.

RYAN

KING OF THE DAREDEVILS

COME, DARLING. I SHALL HELP YOU SLEEP.

NO OFFENSE CHERE, BUT IT DON' WORK ANYMORE. PILLS. JIM BEAM. ***NOTHING*** WORKS.

TELL THE BOSS MAN WHATEVER. I'VE NO IDEA WHEN I'LL BE BACK. DON'T CARE.

MY ROUGE... WHAT HAS HAPPENED WITH YOU?

IT'S CRAZY, BABY. LIKE NOTHING'S BIG ENOUGH TO SEE ANYMORE.

LIKE I MAY AS WELL HAVE ***DIED*** IN THAT OLD PLANE.

CIRCUS COLOSSUS CIRCUS

COAST CITY, CALIFORNIA

...BUT YOUR FLIGHT RECORD AND ACE MORGAN'S RECOMMENDATION ARE THE *REAL* FACTORS.

Surfside

SO WHAT DO YOU THINK, HAL? IS FERRIS THE PLACE FOR YOU?

I CAN'T IMAGINE ANYWHERE I'D RATHER BE, MISS FERRIS.

TO THE FUTURE.

I'LL CONFESS I'M KINDA SURPRISED THAT YOUR DAD ISN'T INTERVIEWING ME. NOT THAT I MIND, IT'S JUST, WELL... YOU'RE A--

I'M A WHAT, A ***WOMAN?*** MY FATHER TRUSTS ***ME*** TO LOOK AFTER THE DAY TO DAY AT FERRIS.

AS FAR AS I CAN SEE, IF THAT'S GOOD ENOUGH FOR CARL FERRIS, IT SHOULD BE GOOD ENOUGH FOR AN UNEMPLOYED PILOT LOOKING FOR A RIDE.

ACTUALLY, I WAS GOING TO SAY... YOU'RE A-- ***LITTLE YOUNG*** TO RUN A MAJOR CORPORATION.

OH, YOU'RE GOOD, FLYBOY. THE GIRLS IN THE STENO POOL HAD BETTER WATCH OUT. NOW, IF YOU'RE DONE TRYING TO MAKE ME, HAVE WE GOT A DEAL?

DEAL.

YOU REPORT FOR TRAINING AND SECURITY CLEARANCE IN TWO WEEKS.

LET'S CELEBRATE.

WAITER-- SOME CHAMPAGNE!

LOOK HAL, DON'T GET YOUR HOPES UP. I DON'T MAKE IT A HABIT TO GET INVOLVED WITH MY EMPLOYEES.

AND I *CERTAINLY* DON'T SPEND MY NIGHTS DRINKING WITH THEM.

THAT'S A PRUDENT AND ADMIRABLE POSITION, CAROL. FORTUNATELY...

I DON'T START WORK FOR TWO MORE WEEKS.

TWO GLASSES.

COLORADO ROCKY MOUNTAINS

SKEET. NEAT. EAT TO THE BEAT.

Age Mellowed!

NOW THAT I'M HERE, I CAN'T REMEMBER WHY I THOUGHT IT WOULD HELP.

IT TAKES FORTY MINUTES TO WALK THE SCAR OUR JET CUT INTO THE SIDE OF THIS MOUNTAIN. WALK. TALK. THE ROLL GOTTA ROCK.

I FIGURE MAYBE THE PILOT MORGAN UNDERSTANDS... ROCKY DAVIS AND THAT PROFESSOR SURELY DON'T. ME, I'M A STUNTMAN. THEY PAY ME THE FAT BANK TO CRASH THINGS ONCE A DAY PLUS MATINEES ON WEEKENDS. THERE IS NO WAY IN GOD'S CREATION THAT WE SHOULD HAVE SURVIVED THIS. I CAN'T IMAGINE A LESS LIKELY EVENT...

...AND THEN I WALK RIGHT INTO ONE.

'BOUT TIME YOU GOT HERE, HOT DOG.

UP HERE, RED! WELCOME TO THE FRATERNITY OF FLIGHT 772.

WOW, I TELL YOU FELLAS, THIS IS *DOWNRIGHT SPOOKY.* A REAL WILD THING. Y'KNOW A...

COINCIDENCE.

GOOD TO SEE YOU, RED. WHAT BRINGS YOU OUT HERE?

WELL, PROFESSOR, I SUPPOSE I JUST CAN'T GET WHAT HAPPENED OUT OF MY HEAD.

SO YOU CAME BACK TO THE CRASH SITE.

THE SAME AS THE REST OF US.

RED'S GOT IT RIGHT. IT IS SPOOKY.

WE ALL SURVIVE THIS CRASH AND THEN COME BACK HERE THE SAME NIGHT?

GUYS, I'VE BROKEN MOST EVERY BONE IN MY BODY CRASHING EVERYTHING FROM MOTORCYCLES TO POWERBOATS. I DON'T HAVE NO EDUCATION, BUT I KNOW ABOUT CERTAIN ***HARD LAWS*** OF PHYSICAL CONTACT. WE SHOULD EVERY ONE OF US BE SMEARED ALL OVER THIS MOUNTAIN.

MY OLD MAN GAVE ME A WATCH WHEN I MADE MY FIRST JUMP. IT'S CHEAP AND KINDA FLASHY, BUT MY DAD GAVE IT TO ME, Y'KNOW?

THE THING IS, IT'S SO CRAPPY IT ALWAYS STOPS DEAD WHEN I MAKE A JUMP. IT'S KINDA BECOME MY BACKWARDS GOOD LUCK CHARM.

THE NIGHT WE CRASHED, *IT DIDN'T MISS A SECOND.* AND HASN'T STOPPED SINCE.

IT'S KEEPING PERFECT TIME.

I'M JUST A COUNTRY BOY. I DON'T KNOW FROM FATE OR DESTINY, BUT YOU GOTTA WONDER...

WHY DID THE FOUR OF US SURVIVE THIS?

YOU GUYS WANT TO GO GRAB A BEER?

KNOXVILLE, TENNESSEE

I CAN SEE THE SMOKE... AND I CAN SEE THE TRIANGLES. I SWING THERE AND I SWAY, AND FAR AWAY I CAN HEAR THE HORRIBLE SOUNDS.

REEEEEK...

AFTER A TIME, THE TRIANGLES GROW BORED, AND I WATCH THEIR GHOSTLY WHITE SHAPES RECEDE PAST THE EDGES OF MY CONSCIOUSNESS. I AM ANXIOUS NOW... FOR DEATH TO TAKE ME AWAY FROM HERE.

RRRR

I WATCH MY SMALL HOME BURN TO THE GROUND. MY WIFE AND DAUGHTER'S SCREAMS STOPPED OVER HALF AN HOUR AGO. I SHOULD GET UP, BUT I CAN'T FIND THE REASON OR THE STRENGTH.

MY WORLD HAS BEEN DESTROYED, AND THE CRUELTY IS THAT I HAVE SURVIVED IT.

AFTER A LONG TIME I FIND A REASON TO MOVE. I CAN'T SAY IT'S A GOOD REASON, OR A CHRISTIAN REASON...

BUT IT'S REASON ENOUGH.

I HEAD INTO THE DIRECTION OF THE WHITE TRIANGLES.

I HEAD INTO THE DARK.

NEW YORK CITY

I SUPPOSE THAT IN THE END, I'D HAVE TO AGREE WITH THE DOCTORS. LOSS AND GUILT CAN BE NURTURED INTO AN ALMOST SUICIDAL SENSE OF DUTY AND UNBRIDLED PATRIOTISM.

RUN!!

I MEAN LOOK AT US. YEARS OF MISSION AFTER MISSION, NEVER KNOWING WHEN YOUR TIME WILL COME.

GRACIE

I KNOW I CAME TO THIS UNIT THINKING THAT IF I COULD SAVE TEN, TWENTY, A HUNDRED PEOPLE... A ***CITY*** OR A ***NATION...*** I THOUGHT IF I COULD DO THAT, IT WOULD ***WIPE THE SLATE CLEAN.***

AND IN A WAY, IT DOES. BUT YOU CAN'T NEGATE THE PAST. IT MARKS YOU.

AND YOU MARK IT RIGHT BACK, WIPING THE SLATE THE BEST YOU CAN. WAITING FOR THE ***AXE*** TO FALL.

WE HAVE TO DRAW THAT NIGHTMARE OUT OVER THE WATER!

JESS, ARM THE MISSILE ARRAY!

JESUS--

RICK!

WHEN YOU MAKE A MISTAKE THAT YOU CAN'T FORGIVE YOURSELF FOR, THAT'S HOW IT IS. YOU WAIT FOR THE AXE. FOR RELEASE.

I CLAW AT THE THERMITE, WANTING TO END THIS RIGHT, BUT I FEEL MY SPINE GO AND THEN A BLESSED NUMBNESS.

IT PULLS ME HIGHER AND I HAVE TIME TO SAVOR A FEELING THAT DESERTED ME YEARS AGO. I'VE REACHED THE END, AND TO MY JOY, I FIND THERE'S ***NOTHING LEFT TO FEAR.***

I HEAR MY PRIMORDIAL EXECUTIONER SAW THROUGH THE THERMITE CHARGES.

IT'S MORE THAN I DESERVE.

I'LL DIE A ***HERO.***

I CAN *FEEL* US LIGHTING UP THE NOONDAY SKY...

AND THEN I JUST STOP.

THIS IS RECON 1116-62. THE THREAT HAS BEEN NEUTRALIZED BY TASK FORCE X. NO CIVILIAN CASUALTIES. OVER.

GRACE

HUGH EVANS WAS A MAN BY WHICH OTHERS MAY BE MEASURED.

A SHINING EXAMPLE OF WILL OVER CIRCUMSTANCE, AND DUTY ABOVE ALL.

I CAN'T GET THAT... *THING* OUT OF MY MIND. I'VE NEVER SEEN ANYTHING LIKE IT.

I HAVE.

ON AN ISLAND BACK IN '45.

TENNESSEE

JOHN HENRY WAS A STEEL DRIVIN' MAN

CHANG!

THEY SAY ONE DAY HE'LL DIE WITH THAT HAMMER IN HIS HAND.

JOHN HENRY WOULD WHISTLE, AND JUST AS OFTEN SING, BUT IN THE MOUNTAIN IN THE MORNIN' YOU COULD HEAR HIS HAMMER RING.

CHANG!

GENUINE PAN-AM MOTOR OILS

THAT YANKEE HAD A GREAT MACHINE TO DRILL THE ROCK AWAY IT WAS SAID TO DRILL LIKE TEN TALL MEN, ALL THE LIVELONG DAY.

THE CAPTAIN TOLD JOHN HENRY, BOY YOU GOT A WILLIN' MIND, BUT YOU'D BEST LAY YOUR HAMMER DOWN, YOU WON'T BEAT THIS MACHINE OF MINE.

JOHN HENRY TOLD THE CAPTAIN, BOSS WHEN YOU GO TO TOWN,

CHANG!

BUY ME A TWENTY POUND HAMMER, AND I'LL DRIVE THAT STEEL DRILL DOWN.

I SWEAR BY ALL THAT'S HOLY, I'LL DRIVE THAT STEEL DRILL DOWN.

THE PACIFIC

ALL RIGHT MISS GRACE. WE'RE IN A HOLDING PATTERN OVER THE ISLAND.

CAN'T SEE THEM AT ALL IN THAT DANGED MIST.

GIZMO-ONE TO FLAGG-- WE'RE IN POSITION, RICK.

COPY THAT, KARIN. WE'VE JUST CLEARED THE MAIN BANK OF MIST. COMPASS READINGS SHOULD GET ME TO A POINT I CAN ORIENT FROM.

REMARKABLE. MUST BE SOME THERMAL SPRINGS FEEDING THE MIST.

YOU WERE RIGHT, FLAGG. THIS IS QUITE A FIND.

AND IF IT'S THE SOURCE OF THE CREATURES WE'VE BEEN ENCOUNTERING, WE CAN BEGIN THE JOB OF CONTAINMENT.

EXACTLY. WE'VE KEPT THIS PLACE CLASSIFIED SINCE '45 BECAUSE THE BLAMED THINGS STAYED PUT.

BUT NOW THEY'RE TEAR-ASSING AROUND THE CALIFORNIA COAST AND BUZZING NEW YORK CITY.

WITH FLYING CLOUD IMMINENT, THE BRASS DECIDED I SHOULD HAND THIS PROJECT OFF TO YOU, HALEY.

IT'S CLEARING UP AHEAD--

HOLY CRAP.

I MEAN, LIKE... HOLY CRAP. JESS, YOU OKAY?

THOSE FLYING THINGS ARE WHAT KILLED MY BEST FRIEND.

THERE. BANK IN BEHIND THOSE TWO, TOWARD THE BASE OF THE HILL.

IT'S FUNNY. THIS PLACE WAS TEEMING WITH LIFE. IT LOOKS LIKE THE HERD HAS BEEN THINNED. DON'T SEE ANY OF THE BIG MEAT-EATERS.

I DO NOT LIKE THIS AT ALL.

MAYBE THAT'S IT. MAYBE THEY'RE DYING OFF, AND THE ONES WE'VE ENCOUNTERED WERE FLEEING FOR SOME REASON.

GIZMO-ONE, THIS IS FLAGG. WE ARE LANDING AT THE CAVE SITE TO RECONNOITER.

STAY SHARP, JESS. IF YOU EYEBALL ANY VISITORS, STAY COOL.

LET'S MAKE IT FAST, HUH, RICK?

THEIR LOCATORS AREN'T SENDING A CLEAR SIGNAL. CAN'T TRACK THEM.

RICK, I DON'T KNOW WHAT IT MEANS, BUT I'M GETTING SOME VERY STRONG IMAGES IN MY MIND. THERE'S SOMETHING LARGE AND ROUND... AVOID IT. IT'S A TRAP.

COPY THAT, KARIN...

WHAT IN THE NAME OF DOUBLE-TALK WAS THAT ALL ABOUT?

KARIN IS MILDLY EMPATHIC. HER SENSE OF THE MOMENT CAN BE ACUTE.

UH HUH.

WELL, I'LL BE DAMNED. JOHN CLOUD'S FLIGHT JACKET.

I'VE GOT TO ADMIT, I WAS HALF EXPECTING I'D FIND THAT MANIAC LIVING HERE AS KING OF THE ISLAND.

HEY, FLAGG, IT WOULD SEEM YOUR FRIEND LEFT YOU A GOODBYE NOTE.

THIS IS THE STORY OF THE LOSERS

CAPT. STORM US NAVY 'SARGE' PETERSEN U.S.M.C.
'GUNNER' WILSON U.S.M.C JOHN GLOUD USAAF

SHOULD ANYONE FIND THIS MESSAGE, LET IT SERVE AS A RECORD OF OUR FINAL MISSION FOR THE O.S.S

LET IT BE KNOWN MY BROTHERS DIED COMPLETING HORRIBLE MISSION. THEY DIED HONOR IN SERVICE OF THEIR COUNTRY AND I CHOOSE TO AND SLAY THE BEAST THAT TOOK MY BROTHERS. FLAGG - I KNOW YOU WILL RETURN TO THIS PLACE. BE FOREWARNED THAT MY VISIONS REVEAL A SPIRIT SO VAST THAT IT HAS NO BEGINNING OR END JUST AN ALL-CONSUMING CIRCLE THAT DWARFS THE MONSTERS THAT RULE THIS CURSED PLACE

JESUS.

"A LIVING THING"?

PERHAPS THAT'S WHAT MISS GRACE WAS SENSING-- AN EVEN LARGER CREATURE. ONE BIG ENOUGH TO CONSUME THESE PREHISTORIC HORRORS.

IT IS A LIVING THING

CHRIST!

WHY DIDN'T JESS--

SEISMICS ARE GOING OFF THE MAP. SOME KIND OF QUAKE.

SOOO BIG-- KKK!

MISS GRACE?

JESUS, ACE SHE'S HAVING SOME KINDA SEIZURE.

JESS! SNAP OUT OF IT, MAN!

A FRIGGIN' MONSTER AND AN EARTHQUAKE. FANTASTIC.

A CIRCLE OF FIRE.

ANTS... IN A CIRCLE.

GODDAMMIT, JESS, WE HAVE TO MOVE!

MOVE IT, FLAGG!

INCREDIBLE.

IT'S LIKE THE ISLAND JUST SWALLOWED IT UP.

GIZMO-ONE, WE ARE INCOMING. PREPARE TO EVAC.

ROGER THAT, PROF. WE HAD A SMALL... EPISODE UP HERE WITH MISS GRACE. SOMETHING REALLY ROCKED HER.

MORGAN, THIS IS FLAGG-- WHAT IS HER CONDITION?

SHE SEEMS OKAY NOW, FLAGG. SHE HAD A SEIZURE, BUT IT ENDED WITH THE QUAKE.

IT'S OKAY MISS GRACE... ITS OKAY.

OKAY... OKAY.

HA HA. IT'S OKAY.

CALIFORNIA HIGH DESERT

DON'T KNOW MUCH ABOUT THE MIDDLE AGES... LOOK AT THE PICTURES AND I TURN-- THERE IT IS!

FERRIS AIRCRAFT. HMMM, LOOKS LIKE SOMEONE HAS THROWN AWAY A PERFECTLY GOOD COLONEL.

OH *GREAT*... HE'S WAVING ME IN.

FERRIS

YOU JORDAN?

THAT'S A ROGER, COLONEL.

I'M COLONEL FLAGG. THOUGHT I'D COME MEET YOU SPECIAL, KINDA HELP YOU WITH THE LAY OF THE LAND.

I DIDN'T REALIZE FERRIS WAS AN AIR FORCE FACILITY.

WELL FOR THIS PROJECT, AND AS FAR AS YOU NEED KNOW, THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT IT IS, YOUNG CAPTAIN.

MISS FERRIS MAY RUN THE FACILITY, BUT THIS PROJECT IS AIR FORCE ALL THE WAY. ***ARE YOU READING ME, JORDAN?***

I SURELY AM, COLONEL. YOUR REPUTATION PRECEDES YOU.

FERRIS

OUTSTANDING. TAKE US IN, JORDAN. LET'S GET THIS BARBECUE STARTED.

JORDAN, DO YOU COPY?

NEGATIVE, SPARKS. NO JORDAN HERE.

JUST SPAM IN A CAN.

Dear Jimmy-
How's it going little brother? Greetings from the high desert. I'm not sure when you're getting these letters, as I have to pay the guy who runs the lunchwagon to smuggle them out for me. The security here is tighter than old lady Sedgewick's support hose.

CUT THE COMEDY JORDAN.

So how's Mom? I hope you two dopes are looking in on her for me. She just hasn't been Mom since Dad died, you know what I mean? You tell Larry to do his bit as well, or I'll fly back there and wax his tail.

SIGH. YES MY LIEGE. JORDAN IS GO FOR EXERCISE 72.

Here at the bird factory, things couldn't be stranger. I figured that if I signed on with a high line outfit like Ferris, I'd be flying some major league equipment.

WEHRKREEEEEEEE

Like Uncle Titus was saying at Lindy's party, any day now they're going to announce a space program, and that means getting noticed. Kind of thought that testing Ferris equipment would get me closer to the top of the pyramid.

↑ ALTITUDE ↑

0 4

↑ SPEED ↑

But so far, it's been nothing but eight weeks of absolute torture. An absurd battery of exercises with no discernible pattern. I've been stretched, dropped, launched, pressed, frozen, and fired out of every gizmo known to man except a cannon. They actually drove me out to a hole in the desert and buried me alive for 2 days while they monitored my body with little wires.

SPLASH!

A few weeks ago I got my hopes up, thinking this was such elaborate training, it must be for some kind of space mission, but I know, I know—that's just me and my wishful thinking. It's common knowledge that the space program will be run by NACA— Not by a 28 year old woman and psycho Air Force colonel. At least I get in the air enough for proficiency...I'm now qualified to fly the X-3 and that monster B-47.

I hit Mach 3 last week for the first time— Dang, Jim! What a feeling... I pulled a wide arc up on the edge of the atmosphere, and the sunlight was tearing holes in the sky, giving me this fleeting view of the dark blanket of stars that lay beyond.

Sometimes I think maybe Dad's up there, and if I fly high enough and fast enough, I'll catch him up there, maybe drinking his beer in that old coffee mug, like he used to.

Enough about Dad, right? The other thing that's happening (and I still can't really believe this) is I'm seeing Carol Ferris. You heard me sucker, THE Carol Ferris. Boy, I wish I could see Jack's face when you tell him that one.

I guess I'm falling pretty hard 'cause all I think about when I'm not flying is her. It's real nice, I mean to feel this way about someone– cause there's been a hell of a dry spell in my love life since Jennifer!

FAMM

FAMM

FAMM

Wish I could say the same for the military hardware they have running this show. His name's Flagg. A real dyed in the wool, Nazi killin', Commie bashin', monster fighting John Wayne type. Even this guy's hair stands at attention. The thing is, Ace recommended me for this, so it must be something big. Plus I don't want to let him down, so I bite my tongue and stick it out.

You can imagine how Flagg has taken to me, Korea's fightin' pacifist. Anyway, I have to take off Jim, it's time for another exercise. Probably going to fire me out of a cannon.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, TIMEX JORDAN!

Best to you, Sue and the kids, your brother, Hal.

TIMEX?

YEAH, LIKE THEY SAY, "HE TAKES A LICKING AND KEEPS ON TICKING."

THAT'S SIX DROPS NOW, TIMEX. YOU GETTING WORN OUT YET?

FRESH AS A DAISY, COLONEL. I COULD RIDE THIS FOOLISH OLD BUCKET *ALL DAY AND ALL NIGHT.*

WHAT DO YOU SAY, DOCTOR GRACE? SHOULD OUR BOY ZIP UP FOR MORE?

SIX TRIPS ARE ***TWO MORE*** THAN ANYONE ELSE HAS MADE. I THINK WE HAVE EVERYTHING WE NEED.

WELL COLONEL, *WHAT DO YOU THINK?*

MISS FERRIS, IT'S LIKE I SAID, HE SURE ISN'T MY FIRST CHOICE, BUT HE'S *DEFINITELY* TOUGH ENOUGH.

AND SMART ENOUGH, IF OUR BEST TESTING IS TO BE BELIEVED.

HOW ABOUT THAT, JORDAN? THEY SAY YOU'RE PRETTY BRIGHT, BUT RIDDLE ME THIS-- WHAT KIND OF ROCKET SCIENTIST BECOMES A FIGHTER PILOT THINKING HE WON'T HAVE TO USE HIS GUNS?

IT WAS PEACE-TIME. I WANTED TO LEARN HOW TO FLY JETS. I DIDN'T COUNT ON KOREA STARTING UP.

SOUNDS TO ME LIKE YOU'RE AN OPPORTUNISTIC HYPOCRITICAL LITTLE PUDKNOCKER.

WELL, COLONEL, I PREFER TO THINK OF IT AS LIFE BEING *FULL* OF COMPROMISES.

I MEAN, LOOK AT ME HERE. NOW. TALKING TO *YOU.*

YOU NEVER KNOW WHAT MISERABLE THINGS YOU'LL HAVE TO DO TO GET WHERE YOU WANT TO GO.

HA! YOU'RE ***KIDDING ME,*** RIGHT HAL? YOU SAID ***THAT*** TO CAPTAIN KILL?

GIMME TWO--

I'VE HAD IT, Y'KNOW? COLONEL FLAGG AND HIS CREEPY GANG. SWEAR THEY'RE ALL NUTS.

YOU DON'T KNOW THE HALF OF IT, HIGHBALL. FLAGG AND HIS SQUAD ARE ALL TOP SECURITY CLEARANCE BRASS, RIGHT?

BUT THEY'RE ALL CERTIFIED, LIKE, SHORT A BRICK OR TWO.

I THE JURY

THAT DOLL THAT'S ALWAYS GLUED TO FLAGG-- KARIN GRACE? BROAD WAS A NURSE BACK IN 'REA.

SCUTTLEBUTT IS HER MEDICAL TRANSPORT GOES DOWN IN THE OCEAN-- SHE SINGLE-HANDEDLY PULLS AS MANY MEN AS SHE CAN ONTO SOME DEBRIS. BUT THEY HAVE NO FOOD, NO FLARES, NO MEDICINE, NO NOTHIN'. THESE GUYS ARE ALL WOUNDED, TWO OF THEM BADLY BURNED.

THEY DRIFT FOR OVER TWO WEEKS. IT TAKES TEN DAYS FOR THE MEN TO GO, ONE BY ONE. THIS POOR BROAD HOLDS THEM AND SEES THEM THROUGH EVERY HORRIBLE SECOND OF IT. WHEN THE LAST ONE GOES, SHE CRACKS UP COMPLETELY.

THEY FOUND HER SIX DAYS LATER. THEY HAD TO CUT THE DOG TAGS OUT OF HER FIST.

SUFFERIN' SUZIE, THAT IS PURE RUGGED. NOW I'M AFRAID TO ASK ABOUT JESS BRIGHT.

JESS *BRIGHT?* THE NAME ALONE... I MEAN, HAL, THAT POOR BASTARD IS LUCKY HE DOESN'T GLOW IN THE DARK! HE AND EVANS, THE DEAD ONE, THEY WERE ATOMIC SCIENTISTS ATTACHED TO SOME OF THE NEVADA TESTS.

EVANS

TAK TAK

BRIGHT

TAK TAK TAK TA

THE TEST SITE WAS PREPPED FROM A BLOCKHOUSE ABOUT A QUARTER MILE FROM GROUND ZERO. THESE TWO EGG-HEADS MANAGED TO LOCK FIVE OF THEIR TEAMMATES INTO THAT BLOCKHOUSE AFTER THE COUNTDOWN HAD BEGUN.

THEY BARELY MADE IT TO MINIMUM SAFE, BUT IT WAS THE OTHER FIVE THAT PAID FOR THEIR SCREW-UP. EVANS WAS TAKEN AWAY PRACTICALLY COMATOSE, AND A FEW DAYS LATER, JESS BRIGHT HAD A LITTLE MENTAL MELTDOWN OF HIS OWN.

IT'S *THE GUILT.*

I'M THINKING MAYBE IT'S A GOOD THING FLAGG IS SUCH A HARD-ASS. KEEP THE CRAZIES IN LINE.

THAT'S RICH, HAL. FLAGG IS LIKE, THE ELVIS OF CRAZY. THE *KING* OF THE NUT JOBS.

THEY SAY FLAGG HAS BURIED MORE MEN THAN ANYONE BUT STALIN.

Y'KNOW, HIRSCH, LOOK AT YOUR CARDS, AND LET SOMEONE WITH A BRAIN TELL THIS PART. IN '44 FLAGG LOST HIS ENTIRE SQUADRON OVER THE PACIFIC. THEY SAY THAT FLAGG THE OFFICER NEVER MISSED A BEAT, BUT FLAGG THE MAN NEVER REALLY RECOVERED.

HE WAS A TOUGH BASTARD THOUGH, AND BRAVE LIKE ONLY A FLAG-WAVER CAN BE. WHEN THEY FORMED THE O.S.S., THEY WERE LOOKING FOR OFFICERS LIKE HIM; MEN WHO HAD HAD THEIR HUMANITY STRIPPED AWAY FROM THEM, WHO COULD NO LONGER FUNCTION IN A NORMAL WORLD.

THEY GAVE FLAGG A SQUAD OF CONVICTS AND INSUBORDINATES. SOMEONE IN STRATEGY DREAMED UP THE NOTION THAT MEN WITH NOTHING TO LOSE WOULD MAKE PERFECT CANDIDATES FOR MISSIONS WITH VERY LOW ODDS OF SURVIVAL.

AND FOR ALMOST FIFTEEN YEARS NOW, THROUGH WAR AND PEACE, THAT'S WHAT FLAGG HAS DONE. LEAD WAVE AFTER WAVE OF BROKEN MEN TO THEIR GRAVES IN THE NAME OF FREEDOM. NOW TO ME, THAT'S PROOF ENOUGH THAT ANY MAN IS CRAZY.

BUT IF YOU REALLY WANT TO SEE FOR YOURSELF, IT'S SIMPLE. JUST LOOK INTO HIS EYES.

IF I WAS YOU, HIGHBALL, I'D FIND OUT WHAT I'M GETTING INTO.

TENNESSEE

BAM

JOHN HENRY LOOKED AT THE MOUNTAIN, AND HE GOT IN THE LEAD TO DRIVE;

BUT THE ROCK WAS SO TALL AND JOHN HENRY SO SMALL THAT HE HUNG DOWN HIS HEAD AND HE CRIED.

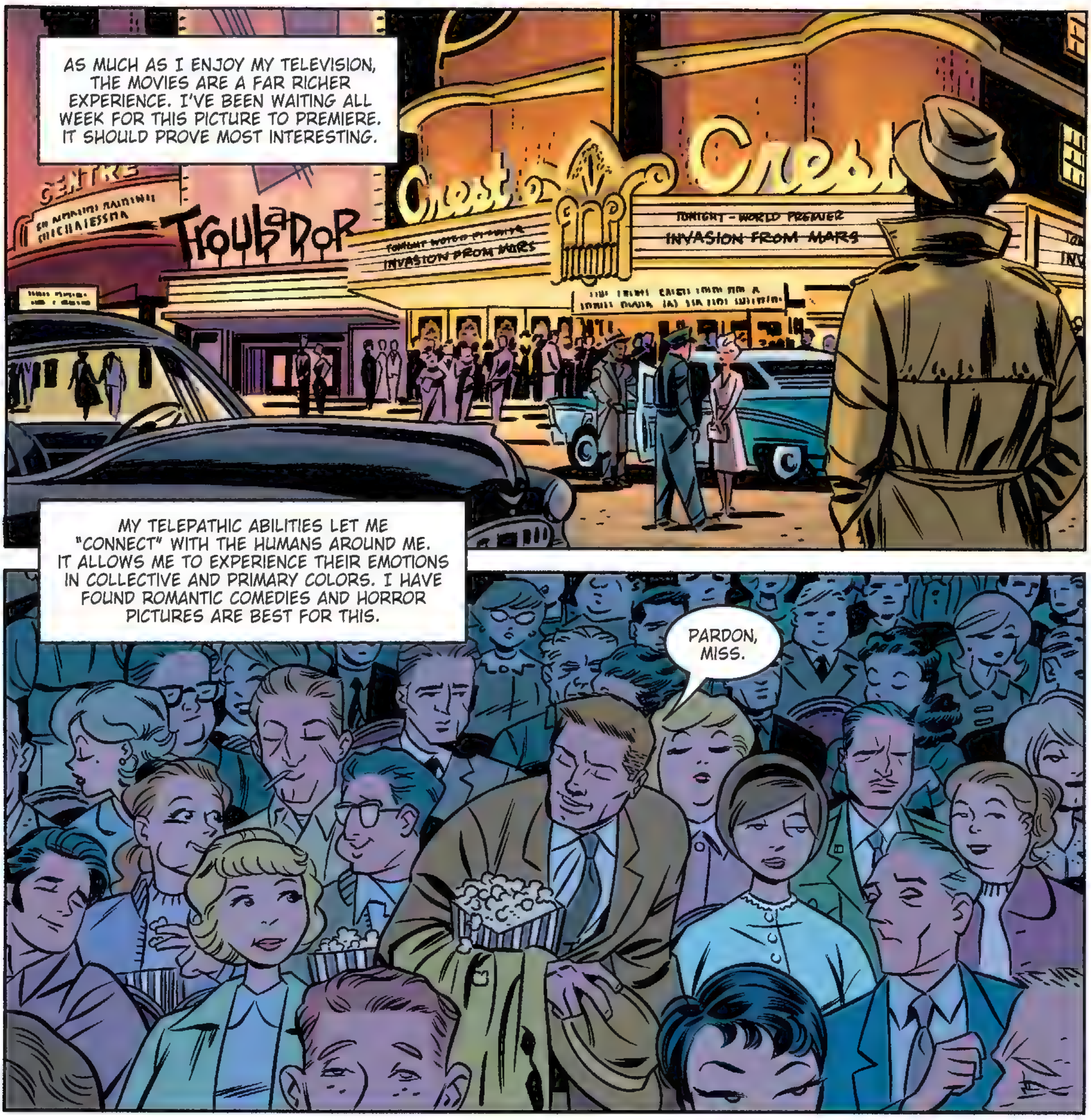
THAT YANKEE HAD A GREAT MACHINE
TO STEAL THEIR PRIDE AWAY
A MACHINE OF FACELESS, HATEFUL
MEN WHO PLAYED THE PART BY DAY.

THE CAPTAIN TOLD JOHN HENRY,
SON YOU GOT A WILLIN' MIND,
BUT YOU'D BEST LAY YOUR HAMMER
DOWN, YOU WON'T BEAT THIS
MACHINE OF MINE.

JOHN HENRY TOLD THE CAPTAIN
THAT A MAN IS JUST A MAN,
BUT BEFORE THAT MACHINE CAN
BEAT ME DOWN I'LL DIE WITH
MY HAMMER IN HAND.

JOHN HENRY TOLD THE CAPTAIN THAT A MAN IS JUST A MAN, AND I SWEAR BY ALL THAT'S RIGHT AND WRONG I'LL KILL YOU WHERE YOU STAND.

CHAPTER SEVEN
PARANORMAL PARANOIA



THE CARTOON IS FITTING. IT IS AN ADVENTURE OF SUPERMAN, THE NATION'S HERO AND PROTECTOR.

LUCKY FELLOW. HE'S FROM ANOTHER PLANET, BUT HIS FACE DOESN'T SCARE PEOPLE TO DEATH. IT MUST BE SO EASY FOR HIM. I CAN FEEL THE CROWD'S LOVE FOR HIM. IT'S LIKE THAT OF A CHILD FOR A PARENT.

AH, THE "NEWSREEL"! SO MUCH BETTER VISUAL DOCUMENTATION THAN TELEVISION NEWS.

CHALLENGING THE UNKNOWN

MOVIETONE NEWS

*HIGH ATOP THIS MOUNTAIN OUTSIDE COLORADO, **FOUR BRAVE MEN** HAVE STRUCK A BARGAIN WITH **ADVENTURE.** THEY ARE THE **CHALLENGERS OF THE UNKNOWN!** THE LATEST GROUP OF AMERICANS TO TAKE UP THE FIGHT AGAINST THE FORCES THAT THREATEN THE WORLD.*

THEIR MOTTO: WHEREVER MANKIND IS THREATENED BY FORCES BEYOND ITS CONTROL, THE CHALLENGERS WILL BE THERE.

*BUT ARE THEY UP TO THE TASK THEY'VE SET BEFORE THEMSELVES? **YOU'D BETTER BELIEVE IT, BROTHER!***

*MEET TEAM LEADER **ACE MORGAN.** ONE OF AMERICA'S BEST JET PILOTS, AND THE MOST HEAVILY DECORATED AIR FORCE PILOT IN KOREA!*

U.S. AIR FOR

TEEN HEARTTHROB **RED RYAN** IS THE YOUNGEST CHALLENGER, LOVED BY MILLIONS THE WORLD OVER AS **AMERICA'S GREATEST DAREDEVIL.** WHAT HE LACKS IN AGE HE MAKES UP FOR IN SKILL AND **SHEER NERVE!**

WHEN IT COMES TO THE BRAINS OF THE OPERATION LOOK NO FURTHER THAN **PROFESSOR WALTER HALEY,** THE EX-NAVY FROGMAN WITH DEGREES IN BOTH AERONAUTICS AND OCEANOGRAPHY. **WATCH OUT PROFESSOR!** THAT EEL LOOKS HUNGRY!

AND FINALLY, AMERICA'S FAVORITE SPORTS PERSONALITY AND BUSINESS TYCOON, **ROCKY DAVIS!** WE ALL THRILLED TO HIS DECATHALON VICTORY IN 1950, AND WALL STREET HAS BEEN THRILLING TO HIS "MOVES" EVER SINCE.

BUT RICH AND FAMOUS WASN'T ENOUGH FOR THIS RENAISSANCE MAN. ROCKY'S BOOKS RECOUNTING HIS EXCITING EXPLOITS AS AN EXPLORER HAVE ALL TOPPED THE BESTSELLER LISTS!

HERE IS EXCLUSIVE FOOTAGE OF THE CHALLENGERS IN ACTION OFF THE COAST OF SOUTH AMERICA. WHAT BRAVERY!

THINGS HAPPEN EVERY DAY THAT CAN'T BE EXPLAINED. THINGS THAT THREATEN THE WORLD WE LIVE IN. WE FOUR ARE ADVENTURERS AT HEART, AND WE WANT TO USE OUR ABILITIES TO HELP PROTECT THE PEOPLE AND THE PLANET.

WELL THAT SOUNDS LIKE A TALL ORDER ROCKY, BUT WE'RE SURE IF ANYONE CAN DO IT, **IT'S THE CHALLENGERS OF THE UNKNOWN.** TOMORROW'S HEROES... **TODAY!**

UP UNTIL THIS MOMENT I THOUGHT POLICE DETECTIVE WAS THE MOST APPEALING THING I COULD BE. BUT THESE MEN-- GOOD BLAZES WHAT SPIRIT!

I HAD HOPED THE FEATURE MOVIE WOULD HELP ME UNDERSTAND WHAT HUMANS KNOW ABOUT MARS.

THERE'S ONLY ONE THING THAT CAN STOP THOSE FLESH EATING MARTIANS.

GOOD OLD AMERICAN KNOW-HOW!

AMERICAN KNOW-HOW? IS THERE NOT SOME RESEARCH PROCESS FOR A FILM SUCH AS THIS? THAT'S SUPPOSED TO BE A MARTIAN? IT LOOKS LIKE A BIG GREEN POTATO.

FOR GOODNESS SAKE, I CAN SEE STRINGS HOLDING IT UP!

SNICKER!

IT ISN'T LONG BEFORE I BEGIN TO REALIZE THIS MUST BE A COMEDY. I MEAN, REALLY-- THE PROPS AND SETS ARE SO CHEAPLY MADE, THE DIALOGUE SO BANAL. IT MUST BE ON PURPOSE.

IT'S ALL RIGHT TODD. IF THE MARTIANS RETURN, AMERICA WILL BE READY!

IT'S OVER.... FOR NOW.

HA HA.

THE PROBLEM WITH THIS COMEDY IS I SEEM TO BE THE ONLY ONE WHO THINKS IT'S FUNNY.

SSSHHHHH!

PIPE DOWN!

ON THE WAY BACK TO MY SHELTER I REALIZE THAT NOBODY HERE ON EARTH KNOWS ANYTHING REAL ABOUT ME OR MY HOME. THE CHARACTERS IN THE FILM, AND EVEN THE MORE GULLIBLE MOVIE PATRONS-- I COULD FEEL THEIR FEAR OF THE UNKNOWN. THEIR HATRED OF THINGS THEY CAN'T CONTROL OR UNDERSTAND.

TAILOR SHOP

I DECIDE THAT IT'S FOR THE BEST THAT THE WORLD DOESN'T KNOW ABOUT ME. IF MY REAL IDENTITY WAS EXPOSED, IT COULD PROVE QUITE DANGEROUS.

DID YOU ENJOY THE MOVIE?

!?!-- HOW DID YOU GET IN HERE?

CUT THE PRETENSE. DON'T YOU MEAN "WHY DIDN'T I SENSE HIS PRESENCE? WHY CAN'T I READ HIS MIND?"

THAT'S MY SECRET. AND TONIGHT, I'M HERE TO TALK ABOUT YOURS.

THIS'LL GO HARD FOR YOU, VIGILANTE. I'M NOT SOME ROOKIE--

STOW THE ACT, MISTER JONES.

I'M HERE TO TALK ABOUT THE NIGHT AT PARIS STREET CHURCH. IN THE 18 MONTHS SINCE WE STOPPED THAT CULT, THERE HAVE BEEN A STEADILY RISING NUMBER OF RELATED INCIDENTS.

I CONCUR. OUR WEEKLY REPORTS REFLECT THE TRUTH OF YOUR DEDUCTIONS.

I THOUGHT IT MIGHT BE LOCALIZED BUT IT'S HAPPENING ALL OVER THE WORLD. MASS DELUSIONS. PEOPLE HEARING VOICES IN THEIR HEADS. VIOLENT VOICES.

THE OBVIOUS COURSE OF ACTION WOULD BE TO DISCOVER THE SOURCE OF THIS PSYCHIC STIM-- EH? WHAT IS THAT?

I TOOK THIS OFF THE LEADER OF THAT MOB AT THE CHURCH. SOME KIND OF MEDALLION OR CHARM.

I BELIEVE YOU HAVE A BOOK.

WHATEVER'S GOING ON IS... BEYOND NORMAL. MY RESEARCH LEADS ME TO BELIEVE YOU ARE IDEALLY SUITED TO PURSUING THIS INVESTIGATION.

THIS IS NOT A REQUEST.

I'VE BEEN WATCHING YOU, MISTER JONES. I KNOW ALL ABOUT YOU. EXCEPT WHERE YOU COME FROM. MY INSTINCTS TELL ME YOU'RE TO BE TRUSTED, BUT MAKE NO MISTAKE--

IT TOOK A SEVENTY-THOUSAND DOLLAR SLIVER OF METEOR TO STOP THE ONE IN METROPOLIS.

WITH YOU, ALL I NEED IS A PENNY FOR A BOOK OF MATCHES.

FEAR OF THE UNKNOWN. HATRED OF THINGS THEY CAN'T CONTROL OR UNDERSTAND.

WASHINGTON, D.C.

--WHEN ONE LOOKS AT THE COURAGE AND SACRIFICE MADE IN THE NAME OF FREEDOM.

THESE MODERN-DAY OLYMPIANS COME FROM FARAWAY LANDS, BUT THEY HAVE CHOSEN THIS GREAT NATION AS THEIR HOME.

THEY HAVE GIVEN SELFLESSLY IN THE NAME OF AMERICA.

TODAY IT IS MY GREAT HONOR TO PRESENT WONDER WOMAN WITH A CONGRESSIONAL MEDAL OF DIPLOMATIC CITIZENSHIP TO THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

I'M HONORED, COMMANDER.

CLAP CLAP CLAP CLAP CLAP CLAP

THANK YOU, FELLOW CITIZENS.

MY HEART IS FILLED WITH JOY TODAY. TO BE... AMERICAN. I CAN IMAGINE NO GREATER HONOR.

BUT THIS APPOINTMENT IS ALSO A SACRED RESPONSIBILITY.

I WANT TO TALK TODAY ABOUT OUR FUTURE.

I WANT TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT LOVE. A BETTER TOMORROW.

MY TIME IN VIETNAM HAS OPENED MY EYES TO THE FUTILITY OF--

THANK YOU, MY DEAR. STIRRING THOUGHTS INDEED.

FOLKS, WE ARE RUNNING SHORT OF TIME, BUT PLEASE ENJOY THE AFTERNOON'S CELEBRATION.

A LOVELY AFTERNOON, DIANA.

YES SIR, GENERAL.

GENERAL. FOR A MINUTE THERE MY CHILD, IT FELT LIKE 1944 AGAIN. HAS IT REALLY BEEN 13 YEARS SINCE WE BEAT THE HUN? HORRIBLE DAYS. BUT GLORIOUS AS WELL. GOOD. EVIL. CLEAR PATHS OF ACTION. NOT LIKE TODAY.

DIANA, I THINK YOU DESERVE A VACATION. SOME TIME TO RELAX AND ENJOY YOURSELF.

BUT SIR, I HAVE SO MUCH TO DO. I'M SURE THAT WHEN I SHARE MY EXPERIENCES IN ASIA WITH YOU--

DIANA, I REALLY MUST GET BACK.

LOVELY SEEING YOU. REMEMBER WHAT THEY SAY; "OLD SOLDIERS NEVER DIE..."

"...THEY JUST FADE AWAY."

I'M SERIOUS, CAROL. I WANT TO KNOW WHAT I'M DOING HERE WITH ALL THESE SECTION EIGHT WEIRDOS.

RELAX HAL.

IN TEN MINUTES YOU'LL KNOW WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW.

BY THE WAY DARLING--

WE MAY BE DATING, BUT I'M STILL THE BOSS AROUND HERE.

HERE WE GO...

MORNING, MISS FERRIS.

MORNING, BOYS. THAT'S RIGHT DARLING, WE'RE CLIMBING DOWN A HOLE.

SUFFERIN' SUZIE!

HAL JORDAN, WELCOME TO THE REAL FERRIS AIRCRAFT!

AS

NO STEP

AS YOU CAN SEE, YOUR SECURITY CLEARANCE HAS JUST BEEN UPGRADED.

GOD'S CREATION, CAROL! THIS IS LIKE SOMETHING OUT OF A MOVIE. WHAT ARE YOU BUILDING? SOME NEW TYPE OF JETS? RADAR PROOF EQUIPMENT? ROCKET SHIPS? I MEAN... GOD'S CREATION!

I'M IN HEAVEN...

STILL THINK I'M A LITTLE YOUNG TO RUN THIS COMPANY, FLYBOY?

WHY DON'T YOU LET ME SHOW YOU HOW IMPRESSED I AM, MISS FERRIS.

AT EASE HAL. AND TRY NOT TO GET FLAGG GOING, WILL YOU? THE GUY'S INTENSE ENOUGH WITHOUT YOU AGGRAVATING HIM.

COLONEL FLAGG, MAY I PRESENT HAL JORDAN FOR BRIEFING OR DEBRIEFING OR WHATEVER YOU CALL IT. HAVE FUN, DARLINGS.

DON'T WORRY ABOUT US, CAROL. WE'RE PALS, RIGHT JORDAN?

FLAGG, DON'T START ON ME. I HAVE EVERY RIGHT TO KNOW WHY I'M HERE. WHAT I'M DOING WITH A BUNCH OF--

LOOK, JORDAN, I HEARD THE SCUTTLEBUTT. YOU THINK WHAT YOU WILL.

Quality thru Teamwork
THE KEY TO OUR SUCCESS

BUT I SAY CRAZY KNOWS CRAZY.

MEANING WHAT EXACTLY? YOU AND I ARE NOTHING ALIKE.

IS THAT RIGHT? IN A MINUTE WE'LL FIND OUT IF YOU'RE AS CRAZY AS I AM. FARADAY WILL BRIEF YOU.

FARADAY?

A SWEETHEART. YOU'LL LOVE HIM.

267
PROJECT DAYS REMAINING

COME IN, JORDAN. MY NAME'S FARADAY.

GREAT. FROM CAPTAIN KILL TO CLOAK AND DAGGER. LOOK, ALL I WANT IS SOME KIND OF STRAIGHT ANSWER--

SIT DOWN, JORDAN, AND SHUT YOUR MOUTH.

IF IT WAS MY CALL, YOU WOULD'VE NEVER MADE IT THIS FAR. YOU'RE WEAK, ERRATIC, EMOTIONAL AND FOR MY MONEY, AT LEAST A LITTLE PINK. BUT I'M TOLD YOU'RE THE BEST WE'VE GOT. THAT'S THE PROBLEM WITH TEAM INITIATIVES.

I'M ABOUT TO SHARE SOME OF THIS NATION'S GREATEST SECRETS WITH YOU. I WANT YOUR MOUTH SHUT AND YOUR EARS OPEN.

AT THE END OF ***WORLD WAR TWO,*** THE ALLIES PLUNDERED THE GERMAN SCIENTISTS WHO HAD PIONEERED THE THIRD REICH'S ***ROCKETRY PROGRAMS.*** SOME WENT TO ***AMERICA.***

SEVERAL OTHERS WENT BEHIND THE ***IRON CURTAIN.*** IT WOULD SEEM THE SOVIETS GOT THE PICK OF THE SCIENTIFIC LITTER.

MEANING WHAT?

MEANING LAST YEAR WHEN THE COMMIES LAUNCHED A SATELLITE INTO ORBIT IT LOOKED LIKE WE WERE CAUGHT WITH OUR PANTS DOWN.

ONCE THEY LAUNCHED THE DOGS INTO ORBIT, WASHINGTON FINALLY WOKE UP AND REALIZED WE HAD TO MEET THIS COMMUNIST EXPANSION INTO SPACE WITH OUR OWN PROGRAM.

LAIKA

NASA

Von Braun w/ 3 Stage Prototype #88766

THIS IS THE SPACE CAPSULE.

ROCKETS TO KEEP CAPSULE FROM ROLLING

ENTRANCE HATCH

HORIZON SCANNER

PARACHUTES

ROCKETS TO SLOW CAPSULE FOR RETURN

ROCKETS TO KEEP CAPSULE FROM PITCHING

NAVIGATION PERISCOPE

HEAT SHIELD

9½ FEET

TOMORROW, THE ***NACA*** IS GOING TO ANNOUNCE THE FORMATION OF ***NASA*** TO THE PUBLIC. CONGRESS HAS APPROVED THE FUNDS TO INITIATE A ***MANNED SPACE PROGRAM.***

HOT DAMN!

THE NASA PROJECT WILL USE VON BRAUN'S ***THREE STAGE ROCKET PROTOTYPE*** AS A MODEL. THE IDEA IS TO PUT A MAN INTO ORBIT AND SAFELY RECOVER HIM, BEFORE THE SOVIETS DO.

NASA WILL SELECT SEVEN ***"ASTRONAUTS"*** TO TRAIN FOR THE MISSION. THE ASTRONAUT WILL ORBIT IN A SMALL CAPSULE AND THEN RE-ENTER THE ATMOSPHERE AND "SPLASH DOWN" BY PARACHUTE.

INCREDIBLE. FARADAY, LET ME ASK YOU--

HOW DO I APPLY TO NASA FOR THIS PROGRAM? I'D BE PER-

SAVE YOUR BREATH, JORDAN. NASA ISN'T LOOKING FOR EX FIGHTER PILOTS WHO CRACK UP BECAUSE THEY SHOOT A COMMIE. THEY WANT HEROES.

PROJECT MERCURY

USAAF SPECIAL OPS

DURING WORLD WAR TWO, THE U.S. STARTED A COVERT ESPIONAGE UNIT COMPRISED OF SPECIAL OPS MEN. O.S.S. COMMAND SELECTED TWO AIR FORCE MEN TO LEAD THE GROUP'S STRIKE FORCE. I WAS PUT IN CHARGE OF STRATEGY AND TACTICAL GENIUS RICK FLAGG WAS TAPPED AS THE UNIT'S LEADER.

WHEN AMERICA NEEDED BRAVE MEN TO TAKE ON MISSIONS OF NATIONAL SECURITY, WE WERE THERE. BEFORE LONG, TRUMAN DUBBED RICK'S GROUP "THE SUICIDE SQUAD" BECAUSE OF THEIR ABILITY TO COMPLETE IMPOSSIBLE MISSIONS.

THE SQUAD'S FINAL MISSION OF THE WAR WAS TO SMUGGLE AN AXIS SCIENTIST STATESIDE. FLAGG WAS ABLE TO RETRIEVE THE DOCTOR'S NOTES, BUT THE SUICIDE SQUAD WAS WIPED OUT. IT COST THE LIVES OF 17 MEN, BUT THOSE NOTES HELD A WORLD OF SCIENTIFIC RICHES.

ARGENT

SUICIDE SQUAD

AFTER THE WAR, THE O.S.S WAS SPLIT INTO SEPARATE ENTITIES, MOST NOTABLY, THE C.I.A. AS AMERICA BEGAN TO RECOGNIZE THE NEED TO PROTECT ITSELF FROM SUBVERSIVE INFLUENCES, TASK FORCE X WAS FORMED TO MEET THE CHALLENGE. IT WAS STRUCTURED WITH TWO DIVISIONS; ARGENT AND THE SUICIDE SQUAD.

I RAN ARGENT, THE DIVISION THAT HANDLED COVERT OPS. WE QUIETLY ROUNDED UP THE MYSTERY MEN, SUPER VILLAINS, COMMUNIST TERRORISTS AND OTHER ELEMENTS THAT THREATENED OUR WAY OF LIFE.

FLAGG AND THE SUICIDE SQUAD FILLED THE VOID LEFT BY SOME OF THE MORE... EFFECTIVE MYSTERY MEN. WHEN AMERICA WAS THREATENED BY FORCES ASSOCIATED WITH THE PARANORMAL, THE SUICIDE SQUAD WAS THERE.

PARANORMAL?

JUST THINK OF IT AS ANYTHING THAT IT TAKES MORE THAN A GUN TO KILL, JORDAN.

BACK IN 1955, HALF THE RADAR EQUIPMENT ON THE EASTERN SEABOARD WAS OVERLOADED BY A RADIO SIGNAL THAT CAME FROM SPACE. THE SIGNAL SEEMED TO ORIGINATE FROM THE PLANET MARS.

ARGENT TRACED IT BACK TO A SMALL OBSERVATORY NEAR GOTHAM. WE FOUND THE BODY OF A RADICAL SCIENTIST NAMED ERDEL-- DEAD FOR SEVERAL DAYS, HIS WALLET GONE. SOME EXPERIMENT OF ERDEL'S, EITHER BY DESIGN OR ACCIDENT HAD MANAGED TO REACH MARS.

A LEVEL SIX WORK-UP ALLOWED US TO CONSTRUCT THIS PLASTER APPROXIMATION OF THE FOOT OF WHATEVER WAS IN ERDEL'S LAB THAT NIGHT. THERE COULD BE ONLY ONE CONCLUSION. THERE WAS LIFE ON MARS... AND IT HAD COME TO EARTH.

YOU'RE JOKING, RIGHT?

YES JORDAN. I'M A REAL KIDDER.

THE PROBLEM IS, WE CAN'T FIND THIS... MARTIAN. FOR THREE YEARS IT HAS ELUDED US COMPLETELY. WASHINGTON DECIDED THAT FIND IT OR NOT, WE HAD TO BEGIN TO CONSIDER THE THREAT THAT MARS REPRESENTED.

FERRIS

AIR FORCE SPACE COMMAND

THE TESCHNER INITIATIVE

11/16/51

IT WAS DECIDED THAT AMERICA WOULD BEGIN WORK ON A SECRET MEANS OF CONVEYANCE TO SPACE. NATIONAL SECURITY WAS PRIORITY ONE, SO IT WAS DECIDED TO USE A PRIVATE COMPANY AS A "FRONT" FOR THE OPERATION.

THIS IS WHERE THE GERMAN FORMULAS COME IN. MOST OF THE AXIS SCIENTISTS HAD BEEN WORKING IN AREAS OF ROCKET SCIENCE. DR. DEITER TESCHNER HAD BEEN A VISIONARY, AND HIS WORK WAS FAR MORE RADICAL AND FANCIFUL. HIS RESEARCH INVOLVED THE APPLICATION OF ROCKET TECHNOLOGY, AND THE DIFFERENT METHODS TO MAKE ROCKET USE PRACTICAL AND EFFECTIVE.

HIS TRIUMPH WAS A FORMULA FOR A NEW PLASTIC ALLOY CALLED GRAPHITE. USING AN AUTOCLAVE, LARGE LAMINATE SHEETS OF PLASTIC ARE BAKED AND PRESSURIZED USING LIQUID NITROGEN. THE RESULT IS A SEAMLESS, LIGHTWEIGHT SKIN THAT'S STRONG AS STEEL.

0871

USAF CONTRACT 00852

CODENAME: FLYING CLOUD

BRIGHT, JESS

GRACE, KARIN

JORDAN, HAL

IN THE YEARS SINCE THE WAR, ARGENT AND USAF ENGINEERS HAVE TURNED THESE THEORIES INTO A REALITY. PRELIMINARY TESTS WITH ROCKETS MADE OF THIS ALLOY WERE INCREDIBLY PROMISING.

WE RECEIVED THE OKAY FOR THE OPERATION YOU SEE TODAY. ON FLAGG'S INSISTENCE, THE PROJECT WAS NAMED *FLYING CLOUD.*

YOU WERE BROUGHT IN AS A BACKUP, BUT LAST MONTH'S UNTIMELY DEATH OF DR. EVANS HAS MOVED YOU UP THE LINE, SO TO SPEAK. ALONG WITH FLAGG, GRACE AND BRIGHT, YOU ARE PROJECT CLOUD'S PRIMARY TEAM.

THIS IS JUST GREAT. I CAME HERE TO FLY JETS, AND I'M STUCK WITH A BUNCH OF CRASH TEST DUMMIES TESTING EQUIPMENT SOME NASA GLORYBOYS ARE GOING TO USE TO GET INTO SPACE. COUNT ME OUT.

PULL YOUR HEAD OUT OF YOUR ASS, JORDAN. YOU'RE NOT GOING ANYWHERE. I READ YOUR FILE. I KNOW WHAT YOU WANT, YOUR FEARS, YOUR DREAMS. YOU'VE GOT SOME KIND OF GUILT PROBLEM OVER A GOOK YOU GREASED. YOU'VE GOT SOMETHING TO PROVE TO THE WORLD. TO YOURSELF.

YOU'VE BEEN BANGING YOUR THICK HEAD AGAINST THE WALL FOR THREE YEARS NOW, LOOKING FOR THAT THING THAT'S MISSING FROM YOUR LIFE. ***THIS*** IS THAT THING.

CH CH OOOOOOM

YOU SEE, JORDAN, NASA IS A LONG TERM INITIATIVE TO GET A MAN INTO SPACE. FLYING CLOUD IS A BOLD ATTEMPT TO ***LEAPFROG*** CURRENT TECHNOLOGIES.

IN OTHER WORDS, HAL...

....WE'RE GOING TO MARS.

GOTHAM CITY

18 MONTHS IS A LONG TIME FOR A GOTHAM COP. I CAN BARELY REMEMBER THE BOOK FROM PARIS STREET, OTHER THAN THE FACT THAT IT HAD GIVEN ME AN UNEASY FEELING WHEN I PICKED IT UP. TWENTY MINUTES AFTER I BROUGHT IT HERE, WE GOT A CALL ABOUT A TRIPLE HOMICIDE AND THE NEXT THING YOU KNOW, THE INCIDENT WAS FORGOTTEN.

IT TAKES ME SEVERAL HOURS TO TRACK THE BOOK DOWN IN EVIDENCE. MY OLD REPORT NOTED THE BOOK'S METAL CASE AND LOCK AND SUGGESTS FINDING A MEANS TO OPEN IT. 18 MONTHS LATER AND IT'S UNDER A PILE OF ILLEGAL FIREWORKS, STILL LOCKED.

THE METAL COVER HAS A CONCAVE MOTIF CARVED INTO ITS CENTER. HAD EITHER THE BATMAN OR I BOTH PIECES OF THE PUZZLE, THE PURPOSE OF THE MEDALLION WOULD HAVE BEEN OBVIOUS.

ERRRR

KA CHIK!

I FEEL THE UNEASINESS CROWDING BACK IN. IT'S AS IF THE BOOK ITSELF IS ALIVE. A VESSEL OF SOME SORT. THE TEXT IS VARIED AND FOR THE MOST PART, UNREADABLE TO ME. BUT THE IMAGES ARE CLEAR ENOUGH.

SOMETHING ABOUT AN OMINOUS, OMNIPOTENT PRESENCE AND GREAT SUFFERING. THE BACK HALF OF THE TOME IS MORE A COLLECTION OF ESSAYS AND DRAWINGS THAN IT IS A FORMAL BOOK. BUT EACH OF THEM SEEMS TO DESCRIBE THE SAME BASIC LEGEND, THROUGH THE EYES OF DIFFERENT CULTURES AND ERAS. THEY ALL SPEAK OF A FAR AWAY PLACE POPULATED BY DRAGONS AND MONSTERS. IT IS HERE I FIND A PICTOGRAM THAT IS PARTIALLY READABLE.

RRRREEE

IT TELLS OF A RACE OF HUMANS KNOWN AS VYKINGS. THEY WERE A NORTHERN PEOPLE, WITH AN APPETITE FOR EXPLORATION AND ADVENTURE.

A YOUNG VYKING PRINCE HAD LED AN EXPEDITION TO MAP THE GREAT LANDS OF THE SOUTH. TWO YEARS INTO THE VOYAGE, THE YOUNG PRINCE FELL VICTIM TO A MUTINOUS CREW. HE WAS CAST ADRIFT ON HIS SHIP'S FIGUREHEAD, AND LEFT TO PERISH AT THE HAND OF THE SEA.

FOR LONG DAYS THE YOUNG PRINCE CLUNG TO LIFE.

HE AWOKE ONE DAY TO FIND HE HAD WASHED ASHORE ON A MYSTERIOUS ISLAND SHROUDED IN MIST. THE PRINCE THANKED HIS GODS FOR HIS SALVATION.

HIS JOY WAS SHORT-LIVED, FOR NO SOONER HAD HE GOT HIS BEARINGS THAN HE WAS SET UPON BY A MONSTER.

A DRAGON-DEMON SO FEARSOME, THAT EVEN THE BRAVE PRINCE FEARED HIS END HAD COME. FOR SOME REASON IT MENTIONS GOING TO ANOTHER PLACE CALLED VAL-HALLA?

WHEN ALL WAS LOST, A SECOND DRAGON, TWICE AS FIERCE AS THE FIRST, GAVE THE PRINCE AN OPPORTUNITY TO ESCAPE.

THE PRINCE WAS RESOURCEFUL AS WELL AS BRAVE. HE SPIED A GREAT SEA CREATURE, AND FASHIONED A PLAN.

THE COURAGEOUS PRINCE SLEW THE SEA BEAST, AND WITH GREAT HASTE HE BEACHED AND GUTTED THE CREATURE.

WITH IT'S MEAT FOR SUSTENANCE, AND IT'S HUSK FOR CONVEYANCE, THE PRINCE MADE GOOD HIS ESCAPE FROM THE CURSED ISLAND, AND BEGAN HIS LONG VOYAGE HOME.

HOME. I FEEL A PANG OF LONGING, AND TRY TO PUSH IT BACK.

I'M READY TO DISCOUNT THE BOOK AS ANYTHING BUT A CURIOSITY, WHEN I FIND AN ORNATE ILLUSTRATION. SOME SORT OF LARGE DARK FORCE, SO LARGE IT BLOCKS THE SUN. THE PLANETS OF OUR SOLAR SYSTEM ARE DWARFED BY IT, AND SEEM SUSPENDED IN ITS THRALL.

I CANNOT RESIST TOUCHING IT...

AAAAAHH!

Remember!

SIGNED FOR

KZZZZAAK!

DEATH AND THEN ENDLESS SUFFERING. FIRE. EXTINCTION.

IT'S NOT COMING...

IT'S ALREADY HERE!

CENTRAL CITY - 1958

PERIODIC TABLE OF THE ELEM

-- GIANT GORILLA IN THE BUSINESS DISTRICT. UNITS ON SCENE ARE CURRENTLY CORDONING OFF THE AREA. ALL AVAILABLE UNITS PROCEED TO..

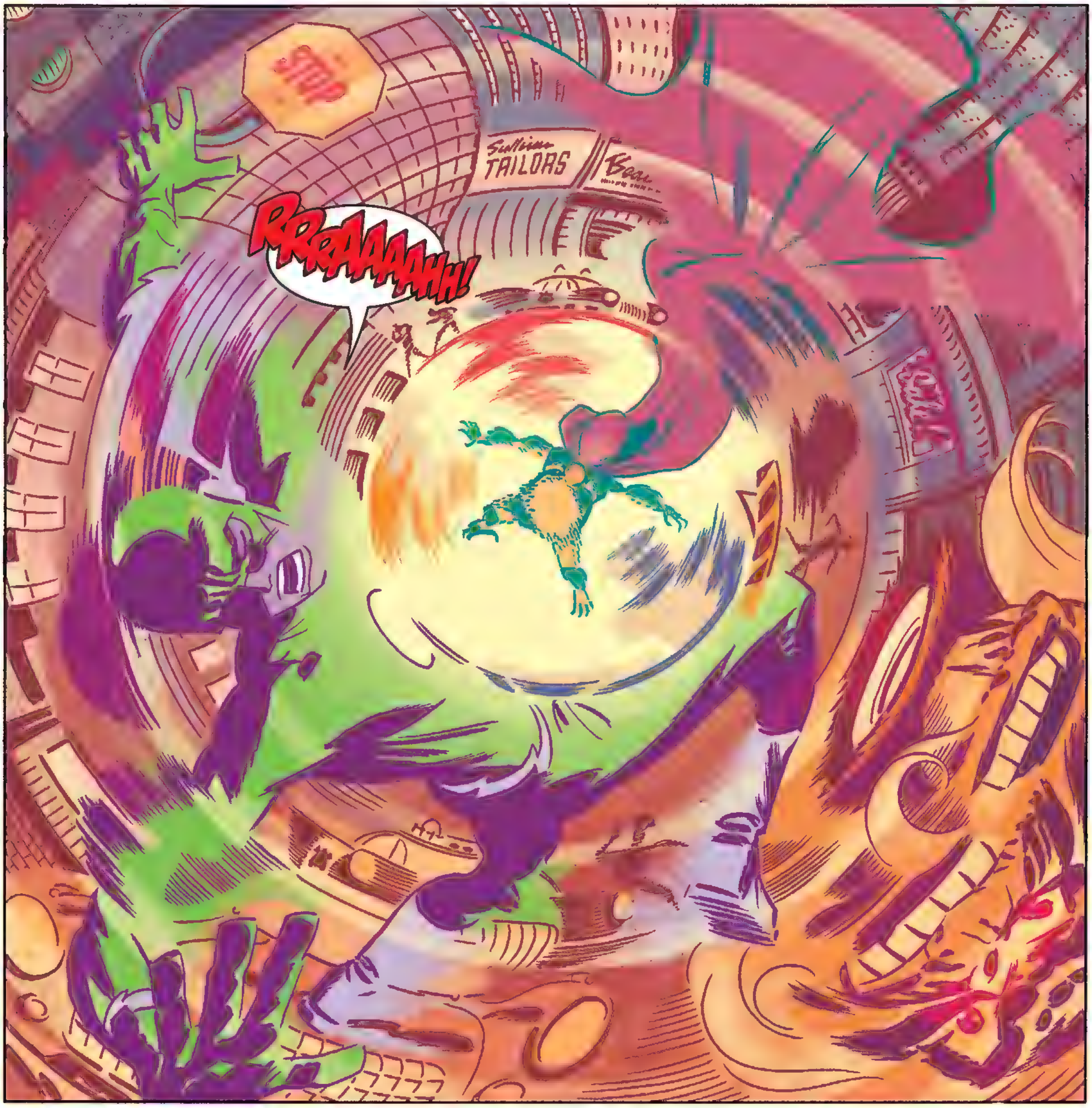
WELL, WELL. SOUNDS LIKE *GORILLA GRODD* IS BACK IN TOWN.

Don't be late! xox Lois

HEY!

HE'S JUST STANDING THEM OFF.

SEEMS *PEACEFUL* ENOUGH. I'LL JUST GIVE HIM A TAP ON THE SHOULD--



CHAPTER EIGHT
GOVERNMENT ISSUES

WE ONLY HAVE A FEW SECONDS! *FIRE CONTAINMENT NET!*

TWANG!

ALL RIGHT, STAND READY. GIVE ME CONCENTRIC SMOKE-- 12-FOOT DIAMETER.

MayFa

WHAT THE HELL?

FOOM

FOOM

FOOM

HOLD YOUR FIRE! OUR BOYS ARE ACROSS THE STREET.

THE FASTEST MAN ALIVE.

YOU'RE ABOUT TO BECOME GOVERNMENT PROPERTY, SWIFTY. WE'VE GOT A NICE CELL PICKED OUT FOR YOU BESIDE ***REX TYLER.***

I WON'T LIE TO YOU. THIS IS GOING TO HURT ***QUITE*** A BIT. ATTACKS THE SPINAL CORD. SYNTHESIZED PARALYSIS.

BUT YOU'LL LIVE.

WHY?

CHUK

ALL UNITS! SUBJECT HAS EVADED CAPTURE. CLEAN-UP CREWS INITIATE LEVEL THREE FORENSICS AND RESTORATION.

I THOUGHT WE WAS AFTER THE MONKEY.

YEAH, WHAT'S WITH THESE GUYS? THE FLASH IS ON ***OUR*** TEAM.

COAST CITY- 1958

1959

MOTORAMA

Cadillac

rysler

WHAT DID I TELL YOU, CAROL? AREN'T THIS YEAR'S MODELS ***SOMETHING ELSE?***

YOU'D BETTER BE TALKING ABOUT THE CARS, FLYBOY.

OF COURSE, MISS CAROL. YOURS IS THE ONLY UNDERCARRIAGE FOR ME.

MY, AREN'T *YOU* THE SWEET TALKER. SO TELL ME...

IS THIS HOW YOU CHARM FLAGG?

FIREBIRD III

I MUST SAY, HIS DISLIKE FOR YOU SEEMS TO BORDER ON THE IRRATIONAL.

I CAN'T HELP IT, CAROL. THE GUY'S ***SO*** GUNG HO IT MAKES ME SICK. SURE, I RIDE HIM, BUT IT'S NO BIG DEAL. LET'S DROP IT AND GET BACK TO DISCUSSING LIFE'S ***FINER*** THINGS.

go

WHAT SAY WE SKIP OUT AND--

HA! DON'T LOOK NOW, BUT WE'RE SUPPOSED TO BE MEETING ***ACE***, REMEMBER? LOOKS LIKE HE BROUGHT A FRIEND.

'SCUSE ME SIR, I THOUGHT YOU WERE MY FRIEND ACE MORGAN, BUT THAT *CAN'T* BE. HE'S A REAL LOSER WITH THE LADIES.

GOOD ONE. SO FUNNY I FORGOT TO LAUGH. HAL JORDAN, CAROL FERRIS, MEET THE NEWEST CHALLENGER, *JUNE ROBBINS.*

NICE TO MEET'CHA. *LOVE* YOUR BLOUSE, CAROL.

C691

JUNE HELPED US WITH THAT GIANT ROBOT THING.

YOU KNOW HOW IT IS WITH GIANT ROBOTS. ONE THING LEADS TO ANOTHER...

AND THE NEXT THING YOU KNOW, HERE WE ARE AT THE AUTO SHOW. SPEAKING OF WHICH, I WANT TO SEE THAT *FIREBIRD!*

YOU HAVEN'T SEEN THAT BEAUTY YET? WELL, FOLLOW US, KIDS.

LaSabre

GOTHAM CITY POLICE HEADQUARTERS

CIVIL RIGHTS. IT HAS BECOME QUITE AN ISSUE IN AMERICA, AND FOR OBVIOUS REASONS, I TRY TO FOLLOW THE ISSUE CLOSELY.

Modern Day John Henry

Is this Southern vigilante a criminal or freedom fighter?

by **Vicki Vale**

Knoxville, Tennessee 6 more members of the Ku Klux Klan were hospitalized last night for wounds suffered during an encounter with the vigilante known as "John Henry". This is the fifth such attack in as many weeks. The appearance of John Henry has helped to further polarize an area that is already being torn apart by civil rights issues

For years, it has been speculated that several areas of the South are controlled by the Klan. With members in every area of local and state politics and law enforcement, the Klan has been said to influence policy on a level that has effectively blocked Federal civil initiatives. The rural areas outside the small town of Knoxville are no exception. As far back as the late 1800s, the KKK have controlled the

region. Research
to very few
Rights abu
should
get th
is

one topic being discussed by both Black
White in Knoxville. Everyone is talkin
about the vigilante known as John
Paul "lil Blue" Layne is a 27 ye
Man who lives in Willow Cre
Knoxville. On the night of
was hidden outside the
for a meeting of the
break up. He had
three weeks.
record the
area.
"I go

THIS JOHN HENRY, FOR EXAMPLE. A TRUE AMERICAN HERO, LIKE THE FATHERS OF THE REVOLUTION. HE FIGHTS ALONE FOR THE OPPRESSED, AGAINST AN EVIL THE REST OF THE COUNTRY IGNORES.

VIGILANTE BREAKS UP KLAN RALLY

KKK ATTACKED

X

TIME

BLACK AMERICA TODAY

ROSA PARKS

SOUTH VIOLE

TWO ARRESTED

ALIENS IN TEXAS

UFO

UFO Today

51

JOHN HENRY SPARKS RIOT

RACISM IN TEN

IF ONLY THERE WAS MORE MATERIAL AVAILABLE, BUT IT IS A SUBJECT THAT IS COVERED SOMEWHAT POORLY, CONSIDERING ITS IMPORTANCE.

MY INTEREST IN SUBJECTS LIKE RACISM AND UFO SIGHTINGS HAS MADE ME SOMETHING OF AN ECCENTRIC TO MY FELLOW OFFICERS. THEY KID ME QUITE A BIT...

...BUT I'VE BECOME THE PRECINCT'S RESIDENT EXPERT IN CRAZINESS.

HEY JOHN, HAVE WE GOT ONE FOR YOU!

NO DOUBT, JOHNNY BOY, THIS GUY IS ONE FOR YOUR WALL.

A REAL YO-YO. HE'S SEEIN' ***LITTLE GREEN MEN.*** WHAT SAY YOU COME CAP OUR PLAY FOR US?

WE'LL SEE, HARVEY. WHAT'S THE PLAY?

THE GUY SHOT A COP ON THE PARKWAY. WE FOUND HIS MOM IN THE TRUNK.

HE'S ***NUTTY AS A FRUITCAKE,*** JOHN. WE'VE BEEN LEANING HARD AND GETTING NOTHING BUT STORIES ABOUT THE MAN IN THE MOON. THE ***PUSH*** AIN'T WORKING, SO WE NEED THE ***PULL.***

I'LL TAKE OVER HERE, DETECTIVE FLEETWOOD.

ER, AH... SURE JOHN, SURE. YOU'RE THE BOSS.

THE BOSS?

THE ***BOSS?*** FOR GOD'S SAKE, I PROMISE I WON'T SAY A THING!

I JUST WANT TO GO FAR AWAY, SEE? SOMEWHERE SAFE. SOMEWHERE THAT MOTHER AND I CAN BE ***SAFE!***

YOU'RE... YOU'RE HERE TO KILL ME, AREN'T YOU?

PLEASE *DON'T HURT ME!* I JUST WANT TO GET AWAY! I JUST--

PLEASE, MR. LIETER. TRY TO CALM DOWN.

I'M NOT GOING TO HURT YOU.

YOU'RE NOT?

I WANT TO HELP YOU.

YOU DO?

HARRY LIETER'S STORY IS *FANTASTIC.* IT HAS ALL THE EARMARKS OF A CLASSIC PARANOID FANTASY. HE HAD BEEN AN ENGINEER AT FERRIS AIRCRAFT IN CALIFORNIA UNTIL HE CRACKED UP.

I MEAN, I SAW *ALL* THE EVIDENCE. THERE ARE MARTIANS ON EARTH. BUT THEY'RE *HIDDEN.* THEY'RE GOING TO TRY AND TAKE US OVER!

--AND THE FOLDER WAS OPEN ON THE DESK.

MY JOB HAS ALLOWED ME ACCESS TO SOME OF THE MORE... COLORFUL MINDS IN GOTHAM CITY. WITH DELUSIONALS, IT HAS TAKEN ME A WHILE TO DISTINGUISH BETWEEN WHAT IS TRUE AND WHAT THEY *BELIEVE IS TRUE.*

BEEN THAT WAY FOR HOURS NOW.

MISTER LIETER IS A PARANOID DELUSIONAL, COMMISSIONER. HE IS EXPERIENCING A *SEVERE* EPISODE.

IT'S SAD. YOU'D NEVER KNOW HE WAS A GENIUS IN ASTROPHYSICS. HIS WORK IS VERY IMPORTANT TO UNCLE SAM, COMMISSIONER. YOU HAVE MY THANKS FOR HIS CAPTURE.

SO THE LAST FIVE YEARS HAVE BEEN SPENT DEVELOPING A ROCKET TO REACH MARS. THE GOVERNMENT IS SCARED TO THIN--

HARRY! SO WONDERFUL TO SEE YOU.

JOHN, THIS IS ***FARADAY,*** A FEDERAL AGENT. IT WOULD SEEM THAT THEY HAVE ***JURISDICTION.***

YOU GAVE US QUITE A SCARE, HARRY. ISN'T THAT RIGHT, MARIE?

WE HAVE BEEN MOST WORRIED, HARRY.

KEEP AWAY FROM ME!

DON'T BE SUCH A BIG BABY. YOU CAN'T JUST ***RUN AWAY*** AND START ***SHOOTING*** POLICEMEN.

PLEASE, MR. JONES! ***DON'T LET THEM TAKE ME!***

I'LL DO ANYTHING, MR. JONES! I'LL CONFESS! BRING ME A PAPER, I'LL CONFESS!

PLEASE, PUT ME IN JAIL!

THE D.A. IS A TOO-FADED KICK S.O.T

MARIE?

COME NOW, HARRY. BEHAVE YOURSELF.

FOR PITY'S SAKE, MR. JONES!

DON'T LET THEM TAKE ME AWAY!

YOU'LL SEE! YOU'LL ALL SEE SOON ENOUGH! WE'RE DOOMED!

WE JUST NEED YOU TO SIGN A RELEASE, FARADAY.

OF COURSE, COMMISSIONER. SOMETHING WRONG, JONES?

ER... NO.

THANKS AGAIN, GENTLEMEN. UNCLE SAM IS GRATEFUL.

WELL, LOOK AT THAT. INTERESTING HOBBY YOU HAVE THERE, JONES.

HOBBY?

ALL THE CLIPPINGS. THE UFO STORIES. WACKY STUFF.

OH, THAT. JUST SOMETHING TO PASS THE TIME. I DON'T ENJOY THE CROSSWORD.

SAUCER SIGHTING

LIFE ON MARS?

ABDUCTED

INSIDE AREA 51

UFOtoday

HA. NEITHER DO I, JONES. PREFER A GOOD GAME OF CHESS, MYSELF.

AH, FARADAY... ABOUT THAT RELEASE.

BE RIGHT WITH YOU, GORDON. IT'S BEEN A PLEASURE, DETECTIVE JONES. THANKS AGAIN FOR YOUR HELP.

IT'S TRUE. IT'S ***ALL TRUE.*** IT FLOODED FROM HIM AS HE GRIPPED MY HAND. THE GOVERNMENT KNOWS I'M HERE. AND THEY ARE BUILDING A ROCKET.

← DISPATCH
BOOKING →

A ROCKET TO MARS.

OPERATION FLYING CLOU

WE HAVE A SMALL METEOR CLUSTER CLOSING FAST.

THIS'LL BE FUN. I'LL SWING THROUGH THEM USING THE ION THRUSTERS.

NEGATIVE, JORDAN. TOO RISKY. ENGAGE LOX THRUSTERS AND CIRCUMNAVIGATE THE CLUSTER.

WE CAN'T AFFORD TO WASTE THE SQUIRT. THE ION T'S WILL TURN THE TRICK.

I SAID ENGAGE JETS AND CIRCUMNAVIGATE!

IGNORE THE ALARM. ENGINEERS ALWAYS SET THE THINGS WELL BELOW TOLERANCE.

WOOP

EXTERIOR HULL BREACH!

WOOP

DAMMIT JORDAN, *THAT'S AN ORDER!*

WOOP

JESS, SEAL THE INTERIOR HATCHES! EVERYONE SWITCH TO OXYGEN WITH RADIOS ON!

WOOP WOOP

WOOP WOOP

WOO!

SHUT HER DOWN!

TO HELL WITH IT!

JEEZ, FLAGG, RELAX.

WILL SOMEONE TELL ME WHAT IN HEAVEN IS GOING ON IN THERE?

I'VE HAD IT WITH YOUR SHOWBOATING, JORDAN.

CLEAR OUT YOUR LOCKER. YOU'RE ***SCRUBBED*** FROM THIS MISSION AS OF NOW.

I'M SORRY, CAROL, BUT I DON'T CARE IF HE'S CHUCK YEAGER, ORVILLE WRIGHT AND AMELIA EARHART ALL ROLLED INTO ONE. HE'S OFF THE TEAM. THIS IS ***NOT*** UP FOR DISCUSSION.

COLONEL FLAGG, THIS IS A FERRIS OPERATION, AND A FERRIS WILL DECIDE WHAT'S RIGHT FOR THE MISSION.

FERRIS AIRCRAFT CORPORATION

DON'T BE NAIVE, CAROL. THE AIR FORCE WILL DECIDE WHAT'S RIGHT OR WRONG FOR THIS MISSION.

JORDAN CAN WORK THE CONTROL CENTER. WE MOVE FORWARD, AND WE DO IT NOW.

THERE'S NOTHING YOU OR YOUR SMARTASS BOYFRIEND CAN DO ABOUT THAT.

CAROL FERRIS

I'M SORRY IF THIS IS ROUGH, CAROL. ONE DAY YOU'LL SEE IT'S FOR THE BEST.

CAROL FERRIS

CAROL FERRIS

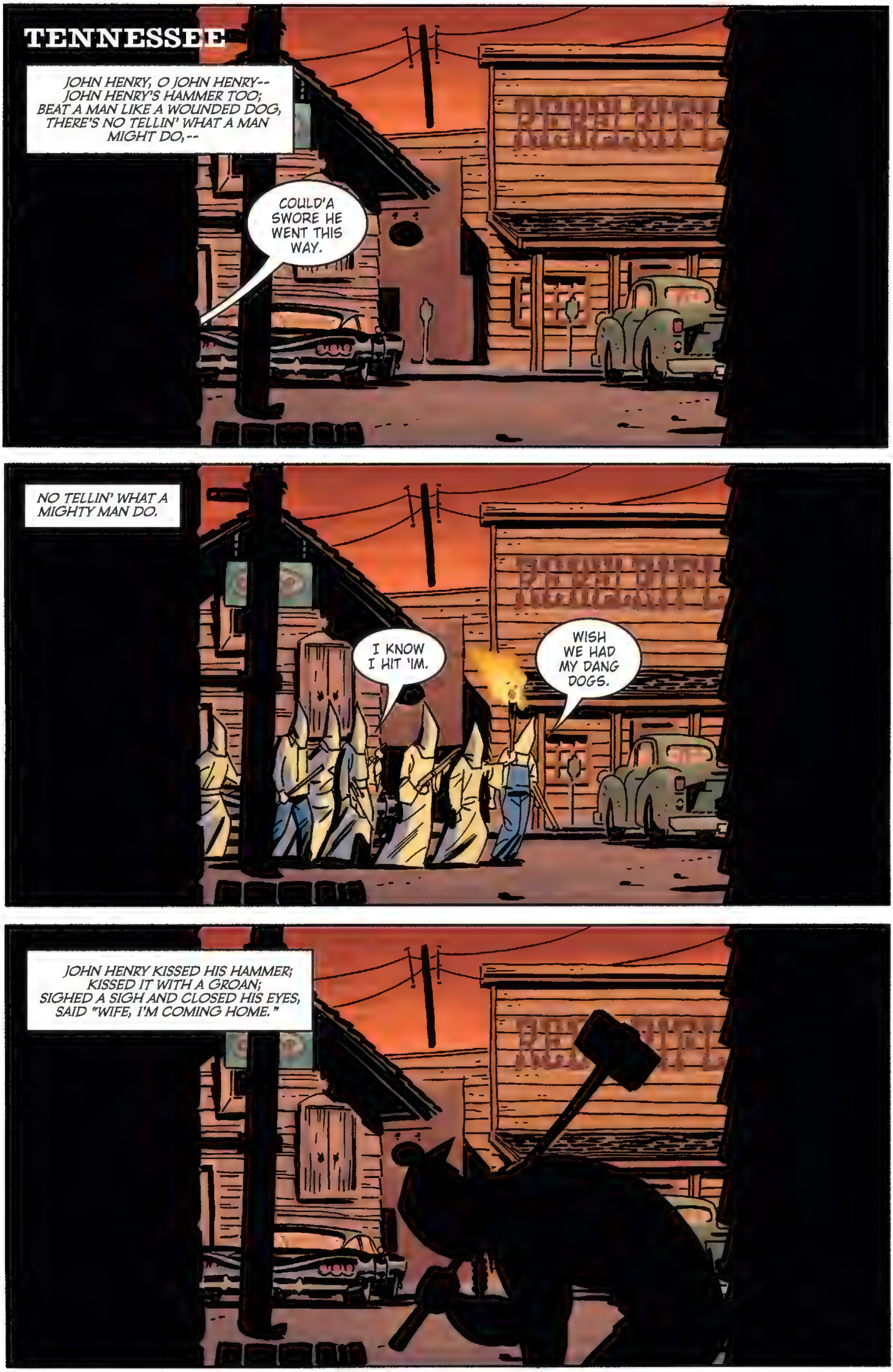
CAROL, I--

CAROL FERRIS

SLAM!

FERRIS

AIRCRAFT CORPORATION


TENNESSEE
JOHN HENRY, O JOHN HENRY--
JOHN HENRY'S HAMMER TOO;
BEAT A MAN LIKE A WOUNDED DOG,
THERE'S NO TELLIN' WHAT A MAN
MIGHT DO,--
COULD'A SWORE HE WENT THIS WAY.
NO TELLIN' WHAT A MIGHTY MAN DO.
I KNOW I HIT 'IM.
WISH WE HAD MY DANG DOGS.
JOHN HENRY KISSED HIS HAMMER;
KISSED IT WITH A GROAN;
SIGHED A SIGH AND CLOSED HIS EYES,
SAID "WIFE, I'M COMING HOME."

JOHN HENRY WAS ON THE MOUNTAIN,
AND THE MOUNTAIN WAS SO HIGH,
HE CALLED TO HIS PRETTY LITTLE WIFE,
SAID I CAN ALMOST TOUCH THE SKY.

I CAN ALMOST
TOUCH THE SKY.

JOHN HENRY, O, JOHN HENRY!
THE BLOOD IS RUNNING RED!
JOHN HENRY FALLS DOWN WITH
HIS HAMMAH TO TH' GROUN',
AND HE KNOWS HE IS BETTER
OFF DEAD.

NOT BECAUSE OF MEN WITH GUNS,
OR CLUBS OR ROPE AND LIES,

JOHN HENRY SAW THE
FUTURE THROUGH THE WHITES
OF A BABY'S EYES.

PLEASE, CHILD... HELP ME. HIDE ME.

HE'S HERE! HE'S HERE! THE NIGGER'S OVER HERE!

THEY TOOK JOHN HENRY TO THE WHITE HOUSE, AND BURIED HIM IN THE SAND, AND EVERY LOCOMOTIVE COME ROARIN' BY, SAYS THERE LAYS A STEEL DRIVIN' MAN,

THERE LAYS A STEEL DRIVIN' MAN.

GOOD EVENING AND WELCOME TO ANOTHER EDITION OF "THE BIG PICTURE."

TONIGHT, WE BRING YOU A ***SHOCKING STORY*** OF MURDEROUS PERSECUTION AND ONE MAN'S STRUGGLE AGAINST THE FORCES OF TYRANNY.

TRY TO IMAGINE LIVING IN A PLACE WHERE AN UNKNOWN GROUP OF TERRORISTS DICTATE RIGHT AND WRONG. THESE LOCAL WARLORDS OPERATE WITH IMPUNITY AND AT TIMES ARE ***SUPPORTED*** BY THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT.

IF YOU WERE TO FALL OUT OF THEIR FAVOR, THEY AND THEY ALONE WOULD DECIDE YOUR FATE.

IMAGINE LIVING IN A PLACE WHERE INNOCENT PEOPLE ARE DRAGGED FROM THEIR BEDS IN THE NIGHT.

WHERE WOMEN AND CHILDREN ARE KILLED AS EASILY AS THE MEN WHO OPPOSE THESE TERRORISTS.

THREE NIGHTS AGO, IN THIS LAWLESS LAND I SPEAK OF, THESE TERRORISTS CAUGHT UP WITH A MAN THEY HAD BEEN HUNTING FOR MONTHS.

HE WAS A MAN THEY ***FEARED GREATLY,*** BECAUSE HE HAD STOOD AGAINST THEIR FASCIST RULE. HIS FOLLOWERS HAD BEGUN TO SEE HIM AS A ***SYMBOL OF HOPE.***

HE WAS BEATEN AND HUMILIATED, THEN HUNG FROM A POST IN THE TOWN SQUARE AND ***BURNED ALIVE.***

WHAT GODLESS LAND ALLOWS THIS, YOU ASK? COMMUNIST RUSSIA? RED CHINA? PERHAPS TURKEY?

IT HAPPENED HERE. ***IN AMERICA.*** TENNESSEE, TO BE PRECISE.

THE MAN THEY KILLED WAS NAMED ***JOHN WILSON.*** THE REASON YOU'VE NEVER HEARD ABOUT IT IS BECAUSE JOHN WILSON IS BLACK.

THE FIGHT AGAINST COMMUNISM GOES ON UNABATED. AMERICA CARRIES THE FIGHT FOR FREEDOM TO THE FOUR CORNERS OF THE WORLD, AND YET IT'S ***UNABLE TO GUARANTEE BASIC CIVIL LIBERTIES AND SAFETY*** TO MILLIONS OF ITS OWN PEOPLE.

JOHN WILSON WAS A VETERAN OF THE KOREAN WAR, WHERE HE FOUGHT WITH DISTINCTION.

UPON HIS DISCHARGE, HE TOOK WORK IN A LOCAL MACHINE SHOP AND SETTLED DOWN.

THIS IS THE ONLY PHOTOGRAPH WE COULD FIND OF JOHN WILSON. HE'S SHOWN HERE WITH HIS YOUNG BRIDE ***LUCILLE,*** AND THEIR BABY GIRL ***LORETTA.***

THIS IS THE ONLY KNOWN PHOTOGRAPH OF ***"JOHN HENRY,"*** THE VIGILANTE THAT SURFACED SHORTLY AFTER THE WILSON KILLINGS. DURING A THREE-MONTH PERIOD HE BECAME A SCOURGE OF THE ***KU KLUX KLAN*** IN TENNESSEE, WOUNDING DOZENS OF KLAN MEMBERS AND KILLING TWO.

DESPITE THE EXTENSIVE BURNS, POST MORTEM EXAMINATION ESTABLISHED THAT "JOHN HENRY" WAS INDEED JOHN WILSON.

ON THE NIGHT OF MARCH 17TH, JOHN WILSON'S HOME WAS BURNED TO THE GROUND. HIS YOUNG BRIDE AND DAUGHTER WERE KILLED IN THE BLAZE, AND LOCAL POLICE ASSERTED THAT WILSON HAD COMMITTED THE CRIMES AND RUN OFF.

LOCAL TESTIMONY REGARDING SIGHTINGS OF THE KU KLUX KLAN THAT EVENING WERE DISCOUNTED AS "DARKEY LIES." I ASSURE YOU, THAT IS A DIRECT QUOTE FROM THE POLICE REPORT.

METROPOLIS

BLACK OR WHITE, JOHN WILSON WAS AN AMERICAN.

HE FOUGHT FOR HIS COUNTRY. HE WORKED HARD AND NEVER SPENT AS MUCH AS A MINUTE IN JAIL. HE WENT TO CHURCH EVERY SUNDAY.

NEW Portal

PHILADELPHIA

IN RETURN, HIS FAMILY WAS MURDERED, AND HIS LIFE WAS STRIPPED AWAY FROM HIM.

WHEN HE ROSE UP AND FOUGHT THESE ENEMIES OF FREEDOM, HE WAS HUNTED, CAPTURED, AND BURNED TO DEATH.

GOTHAM CITY

HOLY MOLEY, THAT IS PURE RUGGED. CAN YOU IMAGINE BEING BURNED TO DEATH?

TONIGHT, MY FINAL THOUGHT IS THIS.

HOW CAN AMERICA HOPE TO PRESERVE FREEDOM AROUND THE WORLD WHEN SHE CAN'T EVEN GUARANTEE IT TO MILLIONS OF HER OWN CHILDREN?

SWEET MERCY, THAT CAN'T BE TRUE!

GET A LOAD OF DETECTIVE DOO-RIGHT. HIT ME AGAIN, JIMMY.

THAT MAN WAS A HERO... A ***FREEDOM FIGHTER!*** A SYMBOL OF HOPE AND RESISTANCE.

JESUS, YOU'RE MAUDLIN. BUT YOU'RE RIGHT.

THAT JOHN HENRY WAS ONE ***HELL OF A MAN.*** AND I FIGURE HE HAD TO KNOW THE PRICE OF THE STAND HE TOOK. THIS IS AMERICA, NOT SOME SUGAR-COATED UTOPIA.

TELL ME, SLAM, WHAT DO YOU THINK THEY'D DO IF THEY EVER FOUND ONE OF THOSE ALIENS THEY ALWAYS TALK ABOUT?

JEEZ, JOHN... WHAT AM I, A MIND READER?

PARADISE ISLAND

COME, DIANA! HOW CAN YOU READ WHEN THE WATER IS SO COOL AND INVITING?

PERHAPS IF YOU YOUNG WOMEN WERE TO READ A LITTLE MORE OFTEN, YOU'D BE BETTER PREPARED FOR NEXT MONTH'S TOURNAMENTS.

BY HERA, LOOK! UP IN THE SKY!

IT'S A *MAN!*

DIANA--

COME FLY WITH ME, KAL. YOU KNOW YOU'RE NOT PERMITTED ON THE ISLAND.

LOVELY DAY, ISN'T IT, KAL?

DIANA, I NEED TO KNOW WHY YOU LEFT. IT CAN'T JUST BE THAT OAF NIXON AT THE PRESS CONFERENCE. WHY DID YOU RETIRE?

OPEN YOUR EYES, KAL! I DIDN'T RETIRE... I WAS FORCED OUT. BECAUSE OF MY BELIEFS.

BUT DIANA, WHY WOULD THEY DO THAT? YOU'RE A CHAMPION OF THE PEOPLE.

YES, SO THEY BOUGHT ME OFF WITH A MEDAL AND SENT ME ON HOLIDAY. BECAUSE WHAT I HAVE TO SAY DOESN'T LINE UP WITH THEIR AGENDA.

THEY DON'T WANT ME IF THEY CAN'T USE ME. THAT'S NOT THE AMERICA I FOUGHT FOR.

MY AMERICA... OUR AMERICA, IS AN ***IDEAL,*** NOT AN ***ADMINISTRATION.*** DURING WORLD WAR 2, WE KNEW WE WERE RIGHT. AND WE'VE ALWAYS JUST ASSUMED WE WERE RIGHT EVER SINCE.

KAL, YOUR REAL POWER LIES NOT IN YOUR STRENGTH, BUT IN YOUR VALUES AND COMPASSIONATE SPIRIT.

THAT IS WHAT AMERICA NEEDS NOW. NOT ANOTHER ADMINISTRATION.

IT NEEDS A ***LEADER.***

MY TREMBLING HAND FLASHES OVER THE PAGES, EAGER TO FINISH AND HAVE DONE WITH THIS MADNESS.

IT'S HERE NOW, IN THE ROOM WITH ME. I DON'T DARE LOOK UP FROM THE TABLE, FOR FEAR OF WHAT MIGHT AWAIT ME IN THE SHADOWS.

IT KNOWS MY PLAN, AND IT'S HERE TO THWART ME. IT KNOWS I WANT TO WARN THE WORLD OF IT'S PRESENCE AND ITS BURROWED INTO MY MIND TO TRY TO STOP ME.

IT HAS RENDERED ME UNABLE TO SPEAK ITS NAME, OR MOVE OUTSIDE MY HOME. IT CANNOT SEEM TO PENETRATE MY CREATIVE WILL, AND SO I FIGHT IT NOW WITH THE ONLY MEANS LEFT TO ME.

A SIMPLE STORY.

energies i will require to tear away from my sphere's embrace. i have no wish to show these vermin the glory of the centre but should they task me, i shall cleanse the sphere for the greater good.

FINALLY, MY STORY IS DONE.

i have grown restless in my youth, and yearn to explore the other spheres that cycle endlessly round the glowing centre of my world. i shall feed and i shall grow, as always, from the centre.

I SMELL THE FRESH PAINT AND CLOSE MY EYES.

have grown restless
my youth, and yearn
xplore the other
res that cycle
ssly round the
g centre of my
shall feed
all grow,
s, from

BANG

GOTHAM CITY

WHEN I DISCOVERED THAT THERE WAS A CHANCE I COULD RETURN HOME, I WAS SURPRISED TO FIND A PANG OF RELUCTANCE. I'VE COME TO CARE VERY DEEPLY FOR MY ADOPTED HOMELAND.

HOWEVER, THE EVENTS OF THE EVENING HAVE LEFT ME REELING. IF AMERICANS REACT THIS VIOLENTLY TO PEOPLE FOR A DIFFERENCE IN SKIN COLOR, THEN I FEAR THEY'LL NEVER BE READY TO ACCEPT ME.

TAILOR SHOP

I SIT THERE, TORN BETWEEN MY TWO WORLDS. IF ONLY I COULD SEE THE OPPORTUNITY FOR CHANGE, I BELIEVE I WOULD STAY HERE. AND ONCE AGAIN, THE TELEVISION GIVES ME AN ANSWER.

--WHICH HAS LED TO INCREASED TENSIONS IN THAT WAR-TORN REGION. TURNING OUR EYE TO LOCA--

URRF!

UH... GOOD EVENING. MY NAME IS THE FLASH. I WON'T KEEP YOU BUT A MINUTE.

A WHILE BACK, I ACCIDENTALLY ACQUIRED MY... POWER. I DECIDED TO FOLLOW IN THIS GUY'S FOOTSTEPS.

THIS IS JAY GARRICK, THE ORIGINAL FLASH. WHEN I WAS YOUNG, HE WAS A HERO OF THE PEOPLE, AND I TOOK MY INSPIRATION FROM HIM.

YESTERDAY, THERE WAS AN ATTEMPT ON MY LIFE MADE BY A CLANDESTINE GOVERNMENT AGENCY. FORTUNATELY, I WAS TOO FAST FOR THEM.

IF YOU'VE EVER WONDERED WHY PEOPLE LIKE MYSELF WEAR A MASK... WELL, NOW YOU KNOW. I HAVE TO PROTECT MY LIFE... AND THE LIVES OF MY LOVED ONES.

FOR SOME TIME NOW, I'VE BEEN DOING WHAT I CAN TO HELP PEOPLE. BUT IT ISN'T EASY WHEN YOUR OWN COUNTRY BRANDS YOU A CRIMINAL.

THERE WERE OVER 4000 UNSOLVED CASES INVOLVING VIOLENT CRIMES LAST YEAR IN CENTRAL CITY ALONE, BUT THE LAW HAS TIME TO SET ELABORATE TRAPS FOR ME.

ALL I'VE EVER DONE IS TRY TO HELP... BE A FORCE FOR GOOD. BUT NOW, I'M BEING HUNTED LIKE PUBLIC ENEMY NUMBER ONE.

1957

IT MAKES ME SAD TO THINK THAT MY OWN COUNTRY HAS NO PLACE FOR ME. SO I'M GIVING IT UP.

ANYWAY... TO ALL THE GREAT PEOPLE I'VE MET OVER THE PAST THREE YEARS I SAY THANK YOU. AND TO THE REST OF YOU...

GOODNIGHT AND GOOD LUCK.

Philco

WHAT IN HEAVEN?

WALTER! WE'RE BACK. WE'RE ON!

MY DECISION IS MADE. I WILL GO HOME.

MY DESK CARRIES SEVERAL WEEKS' RESEARCH INTO THE MASS HYSTERIA AND RELATED ACTIVITY. THERE IS JUST ONE THING LEFT TO DO.

FROM THE DESK OF DR. L. THOMPKINS

Re: Inmate Adam Strange

I REALLY WANT TO THANK YOU FOR THIS, JIM.

YOU'RE A GOOD COP, JOHN. I KNOW IT MUST BE IMPORTANT.

JUST THINK OF IT AS A GOING-AWAY PRESENT. WE COULD BE IN FOR A BIT OF A WAI--

GENTLEMEN.

GOOD BLAZES! WHAT COMPELS YOU TO--

OH, NEVER MIND. WE NEED TO TALK.

EXCUSE US, JIM.

I HAVE TO... GO AWAY. SUDDEN BUSINESS HAS COME UP. I THOUGHT WE SHOULD TOUCH BASE.

DID YOU HAVE ANY LUCK WITH THAT SITUATION WE DISCUSSED?

THE MEDALLION WAS ACTUALLY A ***KEY*** THAT OPENED THE BOOK. THE BOOK IS SOME FORM OF JOURNAL PASSED DOWN THROUGH THE AGES. IT DESCRIBES A FORCE POWERFUL ENOUGH TO CONSUME THE SOLAR SYSTEM.

BUT IF THERE IS ANYTHING ***TANGIBLE*** TO BE GAINED FROM IT, IT IS ***UNCLEAR.***

POWER!

YOU'LL FIND ***HUNDREDS*** OF CASE FILES AND RELATED STORIES AT MY APARTMENT.

THEY'RE ALL YO-- BATMAN?

HE'S LIKE THAT. IT CAN BE ***MADDENING.***

IT'S BEEN A REAL PLEASURE SERVING WITH YOU, JOHN. HOW ABOUT WE GO MEET ***SLAM*** FOR ONE LAST ROUND AT JIMMY'S?

THAT WOULD BE ***TOPS,*** JIM. THAT WOULD BE TOPS.

BATMAN—
My investigation has revealed widespread mania based on vivid premonitions of the planet's "impending DOOM"
Two threads emerge from the collected evidence:
① People are organizing to worship an entity they all loosely refer to as 'THE CENTRE'
These groups or 'cults' are certain this 'CENTRE's arrival is imminent.
② All documented cases involve subjects who experience horrific dreams involving prehistoric monsters and reptilian demons.

I cannot say how, but I believe know this is real—not a hoax
I wish all of you the best of luck

Mr. Jones

Jimmy's

WHAT IS THE CENTRE?

? CASES WORLDWIDE
cults in last
- suicide rate
quarter

OBITUARIES

DOCTOR HUGH EVANS
Renowned Scientist and Patriot

Born—March 9,1919 Died—June 21, 1958
In what is being referred to as an unfortunate accident rese... killed during ... involving ... monsters. ... Evans ... holid... unl... E...

Sauron Invas...
New York's finest battle Pr...

Sunday News January 27th, 1957

Mass Hysteria in Ma...

A SPECIAL PHOTO-ESSAY BY BORIS SPREMO

...sions

From the desk of
LESLIE THOMPK...

CASE #1494; ADAM STRANGE
(cont)...

Furthermore, it is my opinion tha... transferring the subject to an u... government facility would be a t... step backward in regards to his ... recovery.

The subject's obsession with ar... alien world that he "transport... by way of light beams is both ... sensitive and complex psychosi... and of itself.

This case study's value is c... subject's visions of a comin... armageddon at the hands of a... consuming force of some sor... Arkham currently houses 23 ... cases, and as such, Mr. St... seems to be part of a larg... who are experiencing some ... mass hysteria.

(cont)...

IT'S ME. I'VE GOT SOMETHING HERE I THINK YOU'D BETTER TAKE A LOOK AT. NEXT TUESDAY THEN. USUAL TIME AND PLACE.

...ages of doom a... "the Centre" and rumored to ...

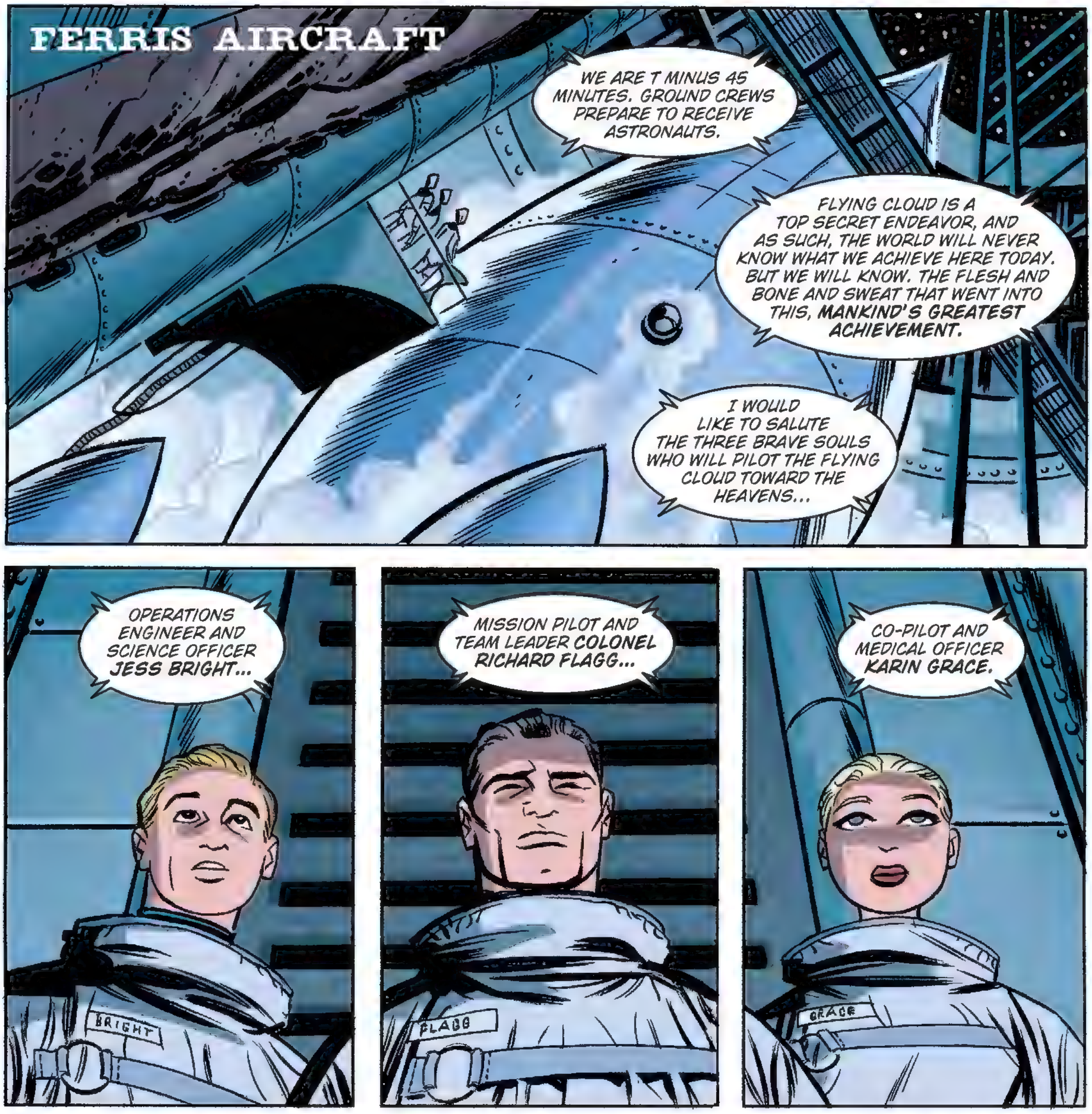
Why?

the King of Monster Island

This is the last story created by best-selling childrens author Ted Smiesel. Was found by his side when we found his body. CORONER → SUICIDE

Millenia passed, and then came ... cycle when a large meteor landed ... pristine surface.

HOT spot



CHAPTER NINE
THE FLYING CLOUD

ALL TEAMS PREPARE FOR FINAL SYSTEMS CHECK ONCE OUR CREW IS STRAPPED IN.

COLONEL FLAGG--

WHAT IS IT, JORDAN?

JUST WANTED YOU TO KNOW THAT WE'LL BE THERE FOR YOU DOWN IN MISSION CONTROL. I GOT TO KNOW THIS ROCKET HALFWAY DECENT, SO IF YOU NEED ANYTHING, JUST...

Y'KNOW, FLAGG, I... I WANTED TO--

WELL, I WANTED TO TELL YOU I'M SORRY FOR THE WAY THINGS WENT.

ANY PILOT WOULD BE PROUD TO FLY FOR YOU.

AND I WANTED TO WISH YOU AND THE FLYING CLOUD GOOD LUCK.

THIS JUST WASN'T YOUR RIDE, HAL. YOU'LL SEE THAT ONE DAY.

NOW GET YOUR ASS DOWN THERE! I'VE GOT A DOZEN EX-NAZIS IN THAT MISSION ROOM WITH THEIR FINGERS ON THE SWITCHES. KEEP AN EYE ON 'EM FOR ME.

WE ARE T MINUS FIFTEEN MINUTES. ALL PERSONNEL EVACUATE TUBE AND RETRACT ALL GANTRIES.

THERE IS NO SECOND CHANCE HERE, PEOPLE. BE SURE THAT EACH EXIT IS SECURE AND LOCKED DOWN. THIS "**RIFLE BARREL**" APPROACH WILL **DESTROY** THE LAUNCH AREA AND MUST BE CONTAINED.

WE ARE GO FOR LAUNCH ON ALL POINTS. SUPPORT CREWS HAVE 10 MINUTES TO COMPLETE RADIO TRANSMISSIONS.

DOCTOR MAGNUS AND HIS TEAM WILL THEN INITIATE THE ELECTROMAGNETIC SCREEN OF INTERFERENCE TO BLIND SOVIET RADAR. WE MAY EXPERIENCE UNEXPECTED COMMUNICATION PROBLEMS AFTER THAT POINT.

THANKS TO **ARGENT**, THE SOVIETS HAVE BEEN FED INTELLIGENCE THAT INDICATES THIS IS NOTHING MORE THAN A MISSILE TEST.

MISS FERRIS, THIS IS HAL DOWN IN MISSION. WE ARE READY FOR THE FINAL PRE-LAUNCH CHECK.

LET'S LAUNCH THIS BIRD.

FLYING CLOUD-- STATUS REPORT.

FLYING CLOUD IS GO. SECURE FOR LAUNCH.

GOOD LUCK, FLYING CLOUD. GOD BE WITH YOU.

CONDITIONS ARE PERFECT AND WE ARE GREEN ACROSS THE BOARD.

I WANT EVERYONE ON THEIR TOES. THERE IS NO MARGIN FOR ERROR.

WE HAVE NO SECOND CHANCE.

HOME. I SIMPLY HAVE TO FLY UP THROUGH THE HULL AND REMAIN INVISIBLE. IT TAKES ALL OF MY CONCENTRATION TO BLOCK THE FACT THAT I WILL BE SITTING ATOP GIGANTIC CYLINDERS OF LIQUID FLAME.

STEELING MYSELF, I PREPARE TO MAKE MY MOLECULES INTANGIBLE TO GAIN ENTRY TO THE SHIP.

MY FOCUS SPLIT, I DON'T SENSE THE MAN NAMED FARADAY UNTIL HE IS UPON ME.

TEN!

DON'T MOVE, MARTIAN.

NINE!

TAKE ANY FURTHER ACTION TO SABOTAGE THIS LAUNCH AND I'LL KILL YOU.

EIGHT!

I DON'T WANT TO INTERFERE. I JUST WANT TO GO HOME.

SEVEN!

HOW DID YOU-- ***YOU'RE IN MY MIND!*** CAN YOU OUTTHINK A BULLET, MONSTER?

SIX!

I'M UPON HIM WITH A SPEED HE ISN'T PREPARED FOR. THE STRUGGLE IS BRIEF, AND AS HE EXPLODES INTO UNCONSCIOUSNESS, FARADAY'S MIND UNFOLDS IN A FLOOD.

BAM

FIVE!

IGNITION SEQUENCE START!

NO. NO!

FOUR!

IT IS STARTING. I MUST LEAVE NOW!

THREE!

ALL ENGINES RUNNING!

TWO!

BUT FARADAY... HE WILL BE KILLED IN THE LAUNCH. HIS THOUGHTS...

...SUCH CONFUSION. NO TIME!

EEEAAAARRRGGH!

ONE!

LIFTOFF!

WE HAVE LIFTOFF!!

U.S. AIRFORCE

GODSPEED, FLYING CLOUD! FROM ALL OF US AT MISSION CONTROL, GODSPEED!

ARKHAM ASYLUM

MY TIME AT ARKHAM HAS ALLOWED ME GLIMPSES INTO THE CRIMINAL PSYCHE THAT HAVE MADE MY BLOOD RUN COLD. BUT FEW HAVE HELD MY FASCINATION LIKE THE PATIENT NAMED ADAM STRANGE.

HE BELIEVES HE LIVES PART OF HIS LIFE ON ANOTHER PLANET THAT HE TRAVELS TO ON A BEAM OF LIGHT.

USUALLY, PATIENTS WITH THESE TYPES OF DELUSIONS INHABIT A FANTASY WORLD FULL OF CONTRADICTIONS AND PARADOX, BUT MR. STRANGE HAS REPEATED HIS STORY IN COUNTLESS SESSIONS WITHOUT EVER ALTERING A DETAIL. HE SEEMS PERFECTLY RATIONAL AND, OTHERWISE, QUITE SANE.

IT IS ANOTHER MATTER ENTIRELY THAT HAS BROUGHT HIM TO MY RECENT ATTENTION.

MR. STRANGE IS THE PUREST EXAMPLE OF A PHENOMENON THAT HAS BEGUN TO OVERTAKE THE MORE SENSITIVE INMATES HERE AT ARKHAM. HE IS CONVINCED THERE IS A COMING FORCE THAT WILL DESTROY MANKIND.

THIS TYPE OF DELUSION IS NOTHING NEW, BUT THE FACT THAT SEVERAL INMATES SEEM TO BE EXPERIENCING IT COLLECTIVELY HAS LED ME TO DO SOME OUTSIDE RESEARCH.

VISIONS of TOMORROW

AMERICAN PLASTICS CO.

RAY PALMER: ATOMIC AGE PRODIGY

SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN

IN FACILITIES LIKE THIS ALL OVER THE WORLD, INMATES ARE EXPERIENCING SIMILAR PREMONITIONS.

I HAVE NEVER HEARD THESE HALLS FILLED WITH SUCH ANXIETY AND... DESPAIR. WHAT IN GOD'S NAME IS GOING ON?

IT'S ALL I SEE ANYMORE. CIRCLES. CIRCLES WITH SWIRLING CENTERS, THEIR EDGES BLEEDING OUT TO FILL MY VISION.

KARIN FEELS IT TOO. I KNOW SHE DOES. BUT WE CAN'T TELL HIM.

HOW CAN YOU TELL A MAN LIKE FLAGG HE'S NOTHING BUT AN ANT? WE'RE ALL ANTS, AND THE CENTRE WILL CONSUME US.

AND THEN I SEE ANOTHER CIRCLE.

NELLIS AIR FORCE BASE
THIRTY HOURS LATER

EVENING, KING.

EVENING, AIRMAN STONE. LIGHT UP NUMBER SEVEN FOR ME. LET'S SEE HOW OUR MARTIAN IS FEELING.

4 L.SNART

6 R.TYLER

EVENING.

WHERE AM I? I REMEMBER THE ROCKET... THEN NOTHING.

YOU WERE PRETTY BANGED UP BY THE BLAST.

THE MP'S FOUND US, AND WE RIGGED THE FLAMETHROWERS BEFORE YOU COULD COME TO. NO POINT. YOU WERE OUT FOR OVER A DAY.

WHAT IS THIS PLACE... SOME KIND OF ZOO?

3

4

NEVER MIND THAT. TELL ME... YOU WERE FREE TO LEAVE. WHY DID YOU SAVE ME?

I AM NOT A MURDERER. IT WOULD HAVE... ***DIMINISHED*** ME TO LET ANOTHER CREATURE DIE UNNECESSARILY.

BUT I ALSO SAW INTO YOUR MIND, AND BY EXTENSION, YOUR HEART. I COULD SEE THAT YOU ARE A MAN OF CONVICTION AND I KNOW YOU BELIEVE ***YOU*** ARE DOING THE RIGHT THING.

YOU ARE NOT... EVIL.WITHIN YOUR MIND, I CAN SEE THAT YOUR STRUGGLE IS IN THE NAME OF GOOD. YOU BELIEVE IT IS A STRUGGLE THAT WILL END. IN YOUR HEART, YOU HONESTLY BELIEVE THERE WILL BE A BETTER DAY, WHEN ALL OF THIS WON'T BE NEEDED.

TO FIND THAT WITHIN YOU, KING FARADAY... IT HAS FILLED ***MY HEART*** WITH HOPE.

KING FARADAY, REPORT TO COMMUNICATIONS. URGENT MESSAGE FROM FERRIS AIRCRAFT!

FERRIS AIRCRAFT

LET'S HAVE IT, CAROL.

IT *COULDN'T* BE WORSE, KING.

RADIO COMM IS SPOTTY BUT IT SEEMS THAT ***JESS BRIGHT*** COULDN'T TAKE IT UP THERE. HE ***CRACKED UP*** AND TRIED TO DESTROY THE ROCKET. FLAGG AND GRACE ARE SAFE IN THE FORWARD HATCH BUT THE ROCKET IS ***CRIPPLED.***

14

THEY'VE LOST ALL POWER EXCEPT THE SMALL BATTERY CELLS IN THE FORWARD CABIN.

FLAGG HAS MANAGED TO GET THE SHIP WITHIN RANGE OF EARTH, BUT THEY'RE OUT OF FUEL.

FOR NINETY MINUTES WE'VE BEEN TRACKING THEM THROUGH A DETERIORATING ORBIT. IN ABOUT 4 HOURS, THEY'LL BURN UP WHEN THEY RE-ENTER.

--COME IN. FLYING CLOUD, THIS IS--

GIVE ME THAT, JORDAN.

FARADAY TO FLYING CLOUD-- WHAT'S THE SITUATION, RICK?

I DON'T SEE ANY WAY OUT OF THIS ONE, KING. WE DON'T EVEN HAVE THE POWER TO CORRECT OUR ALTITUDE FOR RE-ENTRY.

WHAT ABOUT YOUR CARGO?

WE ARE UNABLE TO JETTISON CARGO. **REPEAT**, UNABLE TO JETTISON CARGO. KING, PUT JORDAN BACK ON.

HAL... I WANT YOU TO KNOW I HAVEN'T BEEN ENTIRELY HONEST WITH YOU.

BACK DURING ***THE BIG ONE,*** I WAS ONE OF THE YOUNG PILOTS WHO STARTED IN YEAGER'S SQUADRON.WE WERE ALL PRETTY YOUNG, FAR FROM HOME, AND FACING DEATH EVERY DAY OF OUR LIVES. THERE WERE FOUR OF US BECAME PRETTY CLOSE BACK THEN.

THERE WAS MYSELF, KING FARADAY, ACE MORGAN... AND A YOUNG MAN NAMED ***MARTIN JORDAN.***

THIS JORDAN FELLOW WAS THE BEST PILOT IN THE BUNCH, BUT THERE WAS MORE TO IT. HE WAS ALSO THE BEST **MAN** IN THE BUNCH.

HE USED TO TALK ABOUT HIS BOYS BACK HOME. MARTINI ALWAYS SAID THAT WHAT HE WAS DOING OVER THERE... WELL, IT WAS FOR YOU. SO YOU WOULD NEVER HAVE TO LIVE IN A WORLD LIKE WE DID.

WHEN YOU WERE OVER IN **'REA,** WELL, I GUESS **ACE** PULLED SOME STRINGS AND KEPT AN EYE OUT FOR YOU.

YOU ENDED UP HERE, AND I SUPPOSE IT WAS MY TURN. WHEN THE DECISION CAME DOWN ABOUT THIS NEW CARGO...

MY ENTIRE CAREER HAS BEEN ABOUT MEASURING THE LIVES OF **THE FEW** AGAINST THE LIVES OF **THE MANY.**

YOU'RE BRAVE TO THE POINT OF STUPIDITY, HAL, AND YOU WANTED INTO SPACE **SO** BADLY, I DON'T THINK YOU EVER LOOKED AT THIS MISSION'S ODDS FOR SURVIVAL.

THERE'S A LOT OF BLOOD ON MY HANDS, SON, AND EVEN I KNOW I'M A BLACK-HEARTED BASTARD... BUT IN THE END I SCRUBBED YOU.

I SCRUBBED YOU FOR MARTINI.

CHALLENGER MOUNTAIN

THIS IS ACE MORGAN TO HAL JORDAN AT FERRIS CONTROL. COME BACK, OVER.

ACE? IS THAT YOU, BIG DADDY? OVER.

YOU BET YOUR LIFE, HIGHBALL. WE ARE CURRENTLY ON COURSE TO *INTERCEPT* AND *REDIRECT* ROCKET-- TO *FACILITATE* RE-ENTRY. JUST DON'T ASK ME HOW, BECAUSE YOU'D NEVER BELIEVE IT.

HOT DAMN BIG DADDY! WHAT DO YOU NEED FROM US?

NOT MUCH, HAL. WE GOT MOST OF WHAT WE NEED OFF THE RADIO, AND WE'RE CURRENTLY TRACKING THE FLYING CLOUD FIVE BY FIVE WITH OUR OWN EQUIPMENT.

GIVE ME THAT! MORGAN, THIS IS FARADAY.

HEY THERE, KING. HOW'S TRICKS?

NEVER MIND THE COMEDY, MORGAN. ABORT THIS RESCUE ATTEMPT IMMEDIATELY. REPEAT-- *ABORT RESCUE IMMEDIATELY!*

WHAT WAS THAT, KING? DID NOT COPY-- KZZZZZZZZZZZZK--KLK-KLK- ATOMSPHERIC INTERFER-- KZZZZZZZZZZZZ--

MORGAN, YOU SON OF A BITCH!

JUDAS PRIEST! EVERYBODY WANTS TO BE A **BLOODY HERO!**

THIS IS VERY BAD.

FARADAY, WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?

I'VE GOT TO CALL IN THE BIG GUY.

TOKYO BAY

URF.

KING TO BISHOP SIX! LEVEL 4 SITUATION NEEDS YOUR ATTENTION.

KING TO BISHOP SIX!

WHAKRAK!

SSSSKAAAKRIINCH!!

COME IN, BISHOP SIX!

BISHOP SIX, THIS IS KING!

BISHOP SIX? WHO THE **HELL** IS THAT, FARADAY?

SUPERMAN IS BISHOP SIX.

FLYING CLOUD HAD A SECRET PROTOCOL. THERE ARE THREE WARHEADS IN HER CARGO BAY. ONE IS VIRAL. THE SECOND IS A NERVE AGENT. THE THIRD IS A HYDROGEN BOMB.

YOU BASTARD!

PLEASE SHUT UP, CAROL. I HAVE TO THINK.

THE WEAPONS WERE MEANT AS A FINAL SOLUTION IF THE MARTIANS WERE A SERIOUS THREAT.

FLAGG KNOWS HE HAS TO DESTROY THE SHIP BEFORE IT REACHES OUR INNER ATMOSPHERE.

WE'RE ON THE LIP OF SPACE. BELT IN FOR ZERO GRAVITY. RELEASE PAYLOAD...

NOW!

PAM!

PAM!

IF THE CHALLENGERS "SAVE" THE FLYING CLOUD, WE CAN ALL KISS OUR SORRY ASSES GOODBYE.

MISSILES ARE CLEAR. PREPARE TO FIRE.

YOU CAN START TO DESCEND NOW, ACE... SET COURSE FOR ESTIMATED ENTRY POINT.

ALL RIGHT, BOYS-- YOU'RE OFF!

BOOM BOOM

WHAM. BAM. BODY SLAM.

FOLLOWED BY A FIVE "G" THANK YOU MA'AM.

ROCKY-RED-- DO YOU READ ME? OVER.

GUH-GUH-GUH... GUHHNNA BUKE!

YYYEEEEEHAAA!!

BUCK UP, ROCKY-- THIS PARTY'S JUST GETTING STARTED.

YOU HAVE ACHIEVED RELATIVE SPEED AND ARE APPROACHING CONTACT TANGENT. SEPARATION IN THREE...TWO...

ONE!

FIRE PITONS! FIRE!

BOOM!

PITONS ARE OFF! GOOD GOD, WHAT A SIGHT.

NEVER MIND THE VIEW. RETRACT LANYARDS, DOUBLE TIME!

URHHHHM!

CHANG!

THE DRAG IS WILD, PROFESSOR... BUT IT'S WORKING.

CHANG!

THE SECOND YOU'RE ON, STABILIZE THE ROLL, THEN CORRECT THE ANGLE FOR ENTRY.

I'M ON!

RIGHT BEHIND YOU.

I'LL BE A MONKEY'S UNCLE! IT'S WORKING.

ALL RIGHT, GOOD. NOW WE NEED TO DROP THE NOSE 30 DEGREES.

BUT BE CAREFUL! TOO MUCH TOO FAST AND THE NOSE WILL **ROLL UNDER.** YOU'LL **PINWHEEL** INTO A **FIREBALL.**

CHRIST, PROF! ENOUGH WITH THE SWEET TALK.

HOW ABOUT THIS RIDE, **ROCKY?**

THE CHALLENGERS RULE THE SKIES!

YYYEEEEEHAHH! WE ARE **AGENTS OF FORTUNE!!!**

KATHOOM

KING TO BISHOP SIX! DAMMIT MAN, COME IN!

BISHOP SIX!

THIS BETTER BE GOOD, FARADAY.

UPPER ATMOSPHERE

RED! YOU FEEL IT?

I FEEL IT ROCKY. IT'S BAD, MAN. WE'RE **WAY TOO HOT!** WE AREN'T GONNA MAKE IT.

AT LEAST WE SAVED THE ROCKET. **KZZZZZTTTTTTT--** ADIOS. CUTTING OUT. SO LONG, **REEEKKKKZ-K-K.**

SWIMMING. POOL. NOBODY'S FOOL. GINA'S CHEEK IN AN AUTUMN EVE COOL.

SCOTCH AND ICE WOULD SURE BE NICE. LIKE THEY SAY, THE JAPANESE WAY, YOU ONLY LIVE TWICE.

THE OLD SAW IS THAT THE MOMENT YOU'RE DYING, YOUR ENTIRE LIFE FLASHES BEFORE YOUR EYES.

WELL, I DON'T KNOW WHY ANYONE WHO'D LIVED A LIFE LIKE MINE WOULD WANT *THAT.*

.TJ1CT

WHAT FLASHED BEFORE MY EYES WAS *THE LIFE I NEVER HAD.*

WE CAN'T JETTISON THE WARHEADS. WE HAVE TO DESTROY THE ROCKET BEFORE WE RE-ENTER. WE BOTH PREPARE FOR THE END, LIKE WE WERE DRIVING TO THE MARKET.

IT'S NOT BEEN AN EASY LIFE. THE HORROR AND SACRIFICE.

AN EX-WIFE WHO WON'T SPEAK TO ME AND YOUNG SON I HAVEN'T SEEN IN YEARS.

BUT I CAN LIVE WITH ALL OF IT...

BECAUSE I'LL DIE WITH KARIN.

ARLINGTON CEMETERY

THEY SAY THAT IKE ACTUALLY ***TEARED UP*** WHEN HE GOT THE NEWS. HE ORDERED A FULL ***21 GUN SALUTE*** AT THE FUNERAL-- AN HONOR USUALLY RESERVED FOR MEMORIAL DAY AND DEAD PRESIDENTS.

WHEN MARIE WAS GATHERING KARIN'S EFFECTS SHE FOUND A PORTRAIT KARIN HAD PAINTED, OF HER AND RICK. I DON'T KNOW HOW CLOSE THEY WERE, BUT THE PAINTING... WELL, YOU COULD SEE, IT WAS FROM ***THE HEART.***

KARIN WAS A PAINTER. WHO KNEW?

AHH, JESUS... I SHOULD TAKE ACE UP ON THAT DRINK. LIFE'S ***TOO SHORT*** AND A MAN'S FRIENDS ***TOO FEW.***

FERRIS AIRCRAFT- SIMULATOR ROOM

HEY KID, I SEE YOU'RE BREAKING HER DOWN. MIND GIVING ME A FEW MINUTES WITH HER BEFORE SHE'S SCRAPPED?

KID? IT'S *PIEFACE*, RIGHT?

OIL

WHAT DID YOU CALL ME, WHITE-BREAD? DO I LOOK LIKE A PASTRY TO YOU OR SOMETHING?

THE NAME'S *TOM*, *GOT IT?*

WHOA... *TOM.* I GOT IT, I GOT IT.

WELL, THEN, SINCE YOU ASKED ME NICE, I'LL TAKE TEN FOR SOME JOE.

BUT DON'T TOUCH MY TOOLS!

I GUESS I'VE GOT TO FACE THE FACTS. THIS IS AS CLOSE AS I'M GOING TO GET TO STARS.

WHAT THE--

--HELL ***WAS THAT?*** IT SOUNDED LIKE AN EARTHQUAKE.

HAL JORDAN! NOBODY MOVE! I'LL BE RIGHT DOWN.

WE'RE NOT SURE, MISS FERRIS. IT CAME FROM THE SIMULATOR ROOM. HAL JORDAN WAS--

ALL RIGHT HAL, NOW WHAT HAVE YOU--

SIMULATOR ROOM

--DONE?

CHALLENGER MOUNTAIN

I MUST SAY, ROCKY... I WAS EXPECTING SOME KIND OF "BARRACKS," I SUPPOSE... BUT THIS IS ***BREATHTAKING.***

I'M ***SERIOUS,*** HAL. YOU OUGHT TO SEE OLD RED HERE.

THANK YOU, LOIS. THE ENTIRE PLACE WAS DESIGNED BY THIS RECLUSIVE GENIUS NAMED ***KURTZBERG.*** MAD AS A HATTER.

I'M AFRAID DUTY CALLS, BUT JUNE WILL TAKE YOU DOWN TO THE "SHOP." REMEMBER, ***COCKTAILS ON THE HELIPORT*** AT TWO!

BURNS ALL OVER HIM BUT HIS BEAUTIFUL HAIR MIRACULOUSLY SURVIVED.

UP YOURS, FLAT-TOP.

HA! RED SAYS HI.

NOW HAL, I APPRECIATE THE CALL, BUT IT REALLY ISN'T YOUR STYLE TO "KEEP IN TOUCH."

SO ***GIVE.*** WHAT'S ON YOUR MIND? PROBLEMS WITH THE LOVE LIFE? DON'T TELL ME CAROL FERRIS HAS YOU THINKING ABOUT GETTING A RING.

THAT'S A GOOD ONE, ACE. THE THING IS...

AHH, NEVER MIND, PAPPY. NO BIG DEAL. I'LL CALL YOU NEXT WEEK.

TAKE IT EASY.

BYE.

"WHAT'S UP, HAL?" "OH, NOT MUCH, ACE, JUST MET A ***SPACEMAN*** WITH RED SKIN WHO GAVE ME A ***MAGIC RING*** THAT LETS ME FLY LIKE A BIRD. OH, AND EVER WONDER WHO WAS THE ***BRAVEST*** MAN ON EARTH? WHY, ITS ME, ACE OLD BOY."

WHAT'S UP? I'M UP. AS IN *CRACKING* UP.

AT LEAST I THINK I'M CRACKING UP. BUT I'LL TELL YOU SOMETHING...

IF I'M GOING CRAZY, THIS IS ONE HELL OF A MIRAGE.

I KEEP WAITING FOR IT ALL TO CURL AWAY IN A RIPPLE OF HEAT... THE ***SIMULATOR*** NOTHING BUT A PILE OF STONE, THE ***CRUMPLED BODY*** SIMPLY A KNOT OF CACTUS IN THE SHADE OF A BUTTE.

INTERSTATE
66

BUT THERE "HE" LIES. REAL AS THE VULTURES THAT HAVE BEGUN TO CIRCLE.

I CAN'T JUST LEAVE HIM HERE LIKE THIS. I DECIDE TO DO THE ONLY THING I CAN TO HONOR HIM--

A *PROPER* BURIAL FOR A FALLEN WARRIOR.

CHAK!

FOUR OF YOUR SOLAR CYCLES HAVE PASSED SINCE MY UNDOING.

CHAPTER TEN
S.O.S. GREEN LANTERN

I HAD HOPED I COULD HEAL MYSELF HERE ON YOUR PLANET'S SURFACE, BUT... I AM ***DYING.***

MY NAME IS ***ABIN SUR.***

I HAD COME TO YOUR PLANET ON A MISSION OF GREAT IMPORT.

AS I APPROACHED YOUR ATMOSPHERE, A CATACLYSMIC EXPLOSION FLOODED WITH LIGHT AND POISONS FROM THE ***YELLOW*** SPECTRUM CONSUMED ME.

THERE WAS NO USE FOOLING MYSELF... I ONLY HAD A SHORT TIME LEFT.

I MUST PASS ON THE ***BATTERY OF POWER*** TO... A ***DESERVING*** ONE. AND I MUST DO IT HERE-- ON EARTH.

IT WAS MY DUTY TO USE THE ***RING*** TO SEEK A DESERVING ONE AND BRING HIM TO ME.

AND THE RING CHOSE YOU, HAL JORDAN. A MAN OF ***PRISTINE*** COURAGE. A MAN ***ENTIRELY*** WITHOUT FEAR.

BUT THAT'S RIDICULOUS... DURING THE WAR THEY BRANDED ME A COWARD. I'M NO HERO.

COURAGE TAKES ***MANY FORMS,*** HAL JORDAN.

THERE IS THE COURAGE OF ***CONVICTION.*** TO STAND FOR WHAT YOU BELIEVE IN, ***DESPITE*** THE PERSONAL COST.

THE COURAGE TO AVOID ***PARTISAN THINKING,*** AND VALUE THE EXISTENCE OF ***ALL.***

THE COURAGE TO ***ACT*** DECISIVELY WHEN SURVIVAL IS AT STAKE.

CAN YOU FEEL THE POWER'S ***LIGHT,*** HAL JORDAN? IT REVEALS ALL THAT YOU ARE AND PASSES JUDGMENT.

THE RING HAS CHOSEN YOU.

LOOK AT THIS BATTERY. THIS ***GREEN LANTERN.*** IT IS A SOURCE OF TREMENDOUS POWER GIVEN ONLY TO THOSE WHO HAVE PROVEN THEMSELVES WORTHY.

WORTHY OF ***WHAT?***

WORTHY OF WIELDING SUCH A POWERFUL WEAPON IN THE NAME OF... GOOD. I BELIEVE YOUR PLANET'S WORD IS... ***GOOD.***

IN TIME, YOU WILL BE CONTACTED VIA THE BATTERY, AND ALL WILL BE REVEALED.

THIS RING DRAWS ITS POWER FROM THE BATTERY, AND AS SUCH, IT MUST BE ***RECHARGED*** ONCE EVERY SOLAR CYCLE. IT IS NOW.... ***YOURS,*** HAL JORDAN.

THE RING AND YOURSELF WILL BE PSIONICALLY LINKED. IT WILL MANIFEST AND EXECUTE YOUR VERY WILL.

GOD'S CREATION!

A FLAW IN THE BATTERY'S UNIQUE ALLOY RENDERS IT IMPOTENT AGAINST ANY MATTER OR LIGHT THAT IS YELLOW.

THIS IS THE BATTERY'S ONLY WEAKNESS, BUT MIND IT DOES NOT PROVE YOUR UNDOING, AS IT HAS MINE.

OKAY... SO THE RING DRESSES YOU. CHECK.

LET ME SEE, NOT MUCH OF AN OPS MANUAL HERE... STAY AWAY FROM YELLOW, CHARGE THE RING EVERY DAY, OBEYS MY WILL. CHECK, CHECK AND CHECK.

OKAY, RING-- FLY.

HA, VERY FUNNY. I MEAN...

FLY!!!!!!YYYYYIIIIIII--

IT'S LIKE MY HEART'S EYE COME TO LIFE.

PERFECT, IMMACULATE, PURE... FLIGHT. THE KIND OF FLIGHT THAT FILLS YOUR SPIRIT IN A WAY ONLY A DREAM CAN.

GOD, LISTEN TO ME, WAXING POETIC.

COULD IT BE THAT ALL MY DOUBTS AND TRIALS WERE SIMPLY MEANT TO BRING ME HERE?

I BECOME INTOXICATED WITH THIS GLORIOUS NEW DESTINY.

THERE IS ONLY ONE THING MISSING AND MY HEART WILL BE FULL.

I HEAD FOR *THE STARS.*

THE RING IS LIKE AN EXTENSION OF MY MIND'S DESIRE...THE SPEED IS ***BEYOND*** MY MEASURE.

AS WE SLICE INTO THE HEAVENS, THE SKY SPLITS WIDE, AND FOR A MOMENT ***DESTINY*** PRESENTS HERSELF.

SUDDENLY, A ***PHANTASM***-- MY ENTIRE MIND IS FILLED WITH VAST AND IMPENETRABLE IMAGES. THERE ARE NO WORDS TO HEAR, BUT THE ***SOUND***... THE ***FEELING*** IS CLEAR.

NOT YET, HAL JORDAN.

NOT YET.

BY THE TIME I COME TO MY SENSES, I'M PLUMMETING EARTHWARD. ***WHAT WAS IT*** ABIN SUR SAID?

IN TIME, YOU WILL BE CONTACTED VIA THE BATTERY, AND ALL WILL BE REVEALED.

I SUPPOSE THE SPACE RANGER BIT WILL HAVE TO WAIT.

I PULL MYSELF TOGETHER AS BEST I CAN, AND MAKE A SHAKY LANDING. MY MIND IS BOUNCING BACK AND FORTH, TRYING TO SHUFFLE THESE NEW CARDS INTO PLAY.

I CAN'T BE SURE HOW MUCH OF THIS IS REAL, BUT ***I AM*** CERTAIN THAT THE SIMULATOR I RODE HERE IS REAL.

THEY MUST BE SEARCHING FOR ME EVEN NOW. I SHUDDER TO THINK OF THE FIELD DAY ***FARADAY*** WOULD HAVE WITH THIS.

I DECIDE TO BURY ***EVERYTHING.***

TRUE TO ABIN SUR'S WORD, WITH THIS RING AND A LITTLE FAITH...

I CAN MOVE MOUNTAINS.

I TASTE SOMETHING BACK DEEP, SOMETHING I NEVER FEEL WHEN I FLY.

APPREHENSION. I MEAN, TO WIELD SUCH POWER!

SUFFERIN' SUSIE!!!

IT DOESN'T SEEM REAL. LIKE I'M ***WATCHING*** MYSELF ***WATCH*** THE MOUNTAIN GLIDE EFFORTLESSLY INTO POSITION.

THE CARDS CONTINUE TO SHUFFLE IN MY MIND, AND I STRUGGLE TO KEEP MY INTENTIONS CLEAR TO THE RING. STICK TO THE MANUAL, STRICTLY OPERATIONAL. I PREPARE TO BRING THE MOUNTAIN DOWN TO A GENTLE REST...

...BUT EVEN THE SIMPLEST OPERATIONS CAN ***SNAFU.***

TSSSS

WHOA!

REFLEXES TAKE OVER, AND THOUGH IT ONLY TAKES A DISTRACTED SECOND...

SMP!

WELL, LIKE THEY SAY, GRAVITY IS A HARSH MISTRESS.

KRRAKKABOOOM

RING! RING!! PROTECTION!

I CAN STILL FEEL THE SHOCK WAVES PEALING OFF ACROSS THE DESERT PLATES A FULL THIRTY SECONDS LATER.

GOD'S CREATION, SUCH **DESTRUCTIVE** FORCE.

DID I REALLY DO THAT?

LOIS LANE, JIMMY OLSEN, ALLOW ME TO INTRODUCE *PROFESSOR* HALEY IF WE CAN, LIKE, TEAR HIM AWAY FROM THAT *NUTTY GIZMO.*

FORGIVE JUNE, MISS LANE. WHY THE WORLD'S FOREMOST AUTHORITY ON ABSTRACT AUTOMATED THINKING INSISTS ON TALKING LIKE A CIRCUS CARNY IS PROBABLY A MATTER BEST TAKEN UP WITH RED RYAN.

LOOKS LIKE A BUNCH OF PREHISTORIC SPAGHETTI, DOC.

THIS *PASTA* IS ACTUALLY TISSUE SAMPLES FROM CREATURES THAT HAVE BEEN APPEARING MORE AND MORE FREQUENTLY ALONG FIRST THE PACIFIC AND THEN ATLANTIC COASTS.

ALTHOUGH THEIR MAKEUP SEEMS TO BE TERRAN, THE DNA IS LOADED WITH CODE EXCLUSIVE TO THEM-- IT'S THE TYPE OF STUFF YOUR READERS SHOULD BE FASCINATED BY.

ACTUALLY, PROFESSOR, IT'S *REALLY* MORE OF A LIFESTYLE PIECE. Y'KNOW, *PICTORIAL* REALLY.

I THINK OVER BY THE WINDOW... NOW TOWARDS ME SLIGHTLY.

"SAY CHEESE" AND ALL THAT. GOT IT.

LIKE, RELAX, DOC. YOU'RE STIFFER THAN ACE'S HAIRCUT.

SO, PROFESSOR, WHEN YOU'RE NOT SMASHING ATOMS WHAT DO YOU DO FOR--

WOOP

SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN

--EXCITEMENT?

THAT'S A NATIONAL SECURITY CODE. WHAT HAVE WE GOT, ROCKY?

WOOP WOOP

THE DYMOTYPE HAS BEEN GOING BUGGY UP HERE, PROFESSOR. IT'S ANOTHER OF YOUR DINOSAURS. THIS TIME AT CAPE CANAVERAL.

JUDAS PRIEST! THAT'S FOUR HUNDRED MILES **NORTH** OF THE LAST SIGHTING. YOU AND RED MIND THE SHOP WHILE WE--

NICE TRY, PROFESSOR, BUT IF YOU THINK I'M GONNA LET YOU FLY OFF WITH LOIS LANE, YOU'VE GOT ROCKS IN YOUR HEAD.

*UHH... ROCKY. SHE CAN **HEAR** YOU.*

SIGH. SO MUCH FOR COCKTAILS AT TWO.

C'MON, LOIS! I'LL SHOW YOU WHAT WE DO FOR EXCITEMENT.

LET'S GO, ACE! ***SHAKE IT, DON'T BREAK IT!***

LAUNCH SCRAMBLE

CHAPTER ELEVEN
TOWARDS THE CENTRE

EXP››01

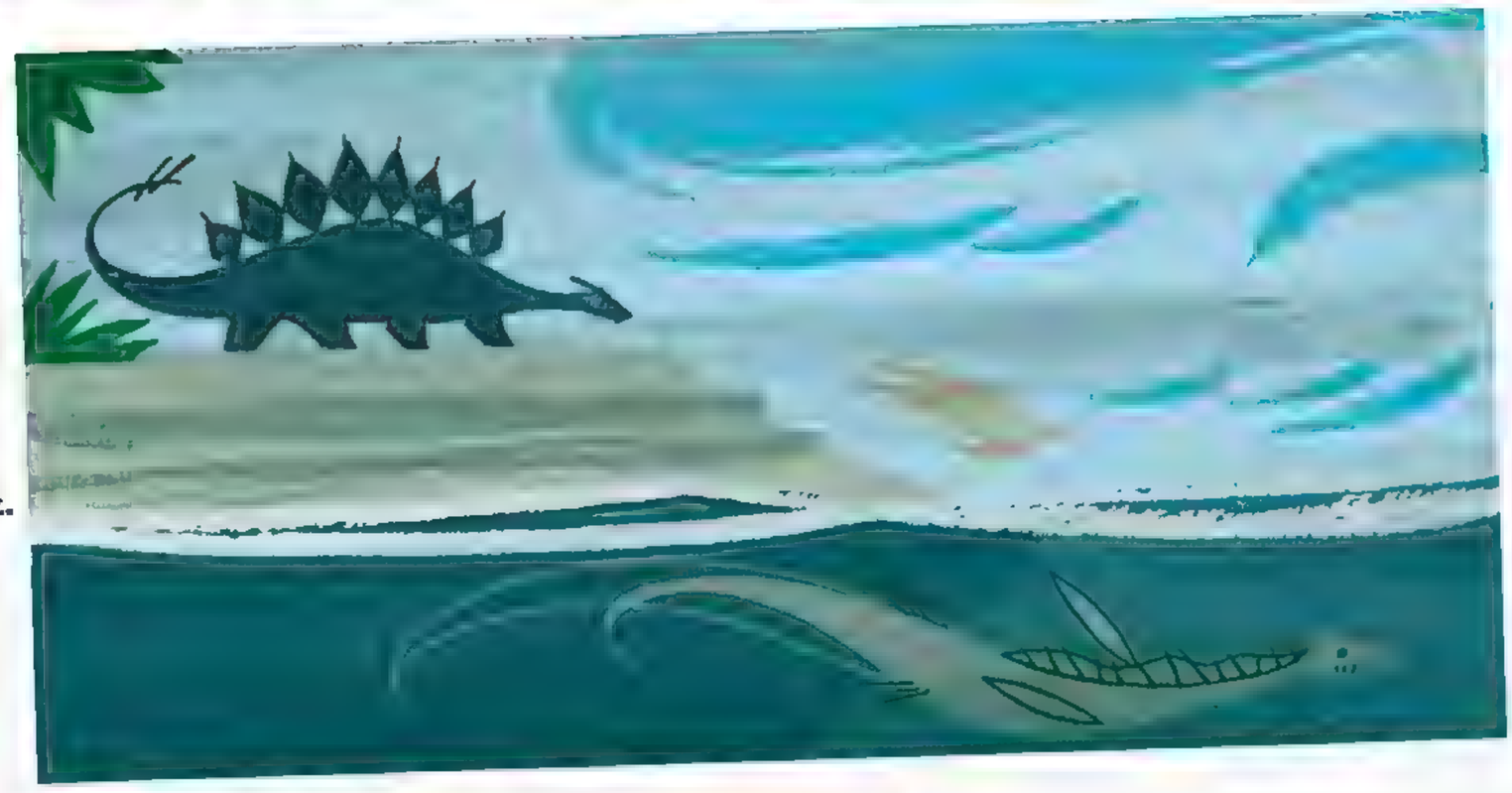
This is the last story created by best-selling children's author Ted Smiesel. I was found by his side when we found his body. CORONER → SUICIDE

like all things
on this hurling sphere,
i emerged from the

like all things
on this hurling sphere,
i emerged from the
molten centre of creation.
but mine has been a
unique path.
isolated, i developed
attributes beyond those
of lesser things.

the force of contact
plunged our idyllic
sphere into a chaotic
garden of death.
light was life, and
black chunks of death
had filled the skies.

with great haste, i set
to the task of preparing
an environment in
which i could sustain
the lesser things.
with flora and flesh,
i would find sustenance.
at the centre of
the great ocean i would
ensure that life
would survive.

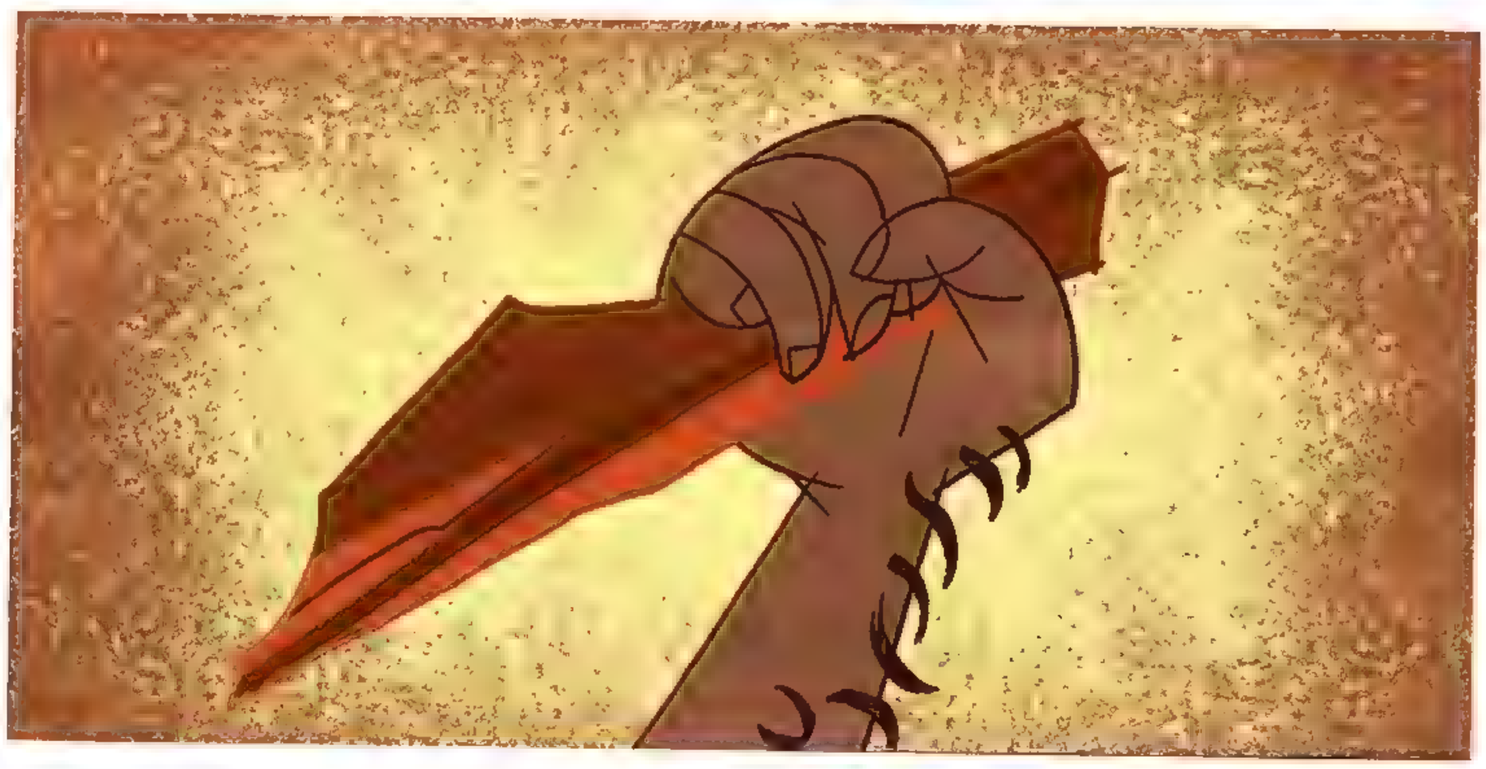


then came an era
of pristine beauty
and blessed quiet.
our sphere lay dead
under a glistening pearl
coat, but life prevailed
through my will.
i lived and fed on
the lesser things,
growing from the centre.

the lesser things,
growing from the centre.

soon the heavens
opened, and the sphere
began to nurture
and sustain curious
new kinds of life.
all were lesser things,
but there was one
creature that stood
above the rest.

unlike my things,
the blood ran hot
through this one's
impatient heart.
its fragile shell belied
a vicious nature, and
its clever mind was
quick to find new ways
to control the sphere.

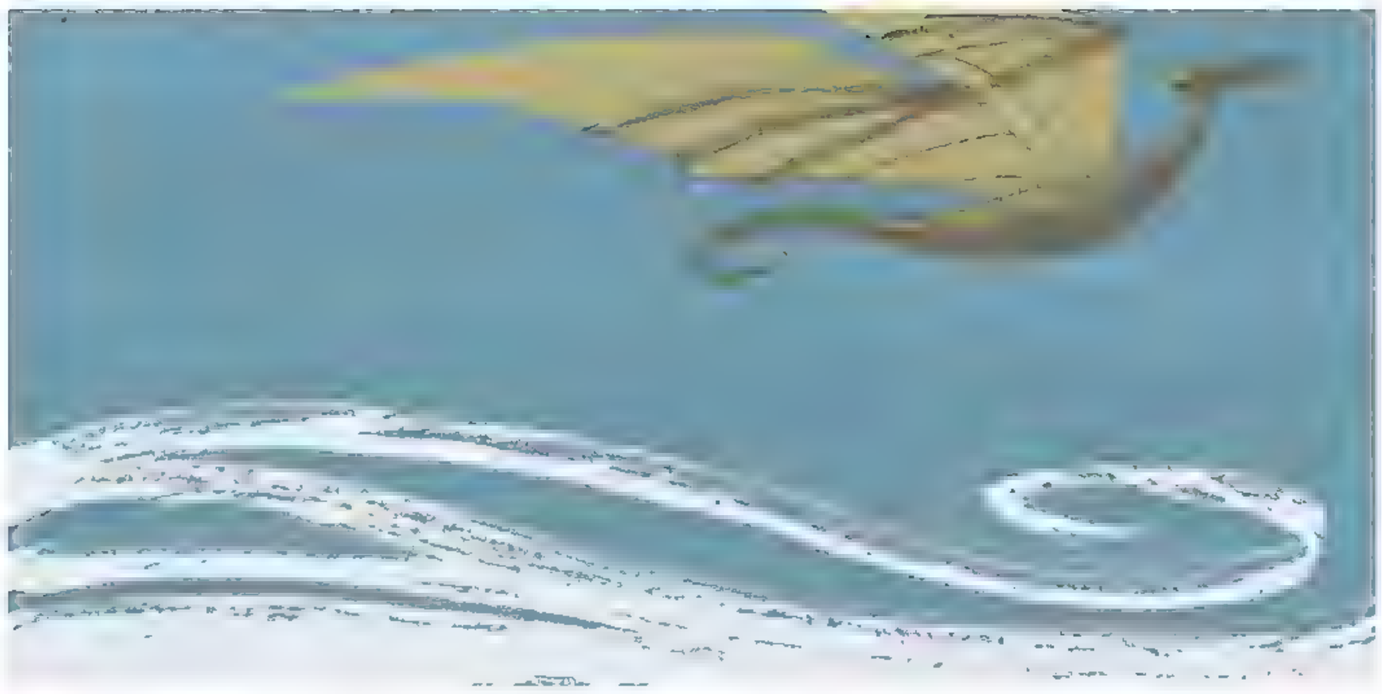


in what seemed
a heartbeat, these things
had proliferated in
both numbers, and
destructive means.
another heartbeat, and
they had brought their
conflicts to my haven.

by the time they had
harnessed the most
destructive forces on
our sphere, i concluded
it was time to leave my
azure home. long have
i dreamt of traveling
the spheres beyond mine,
claiming them for the
centre's glory.

i sent forth an airborne

i sent forth an airborne centrist to seek the rich energies i will require to tear away from my sphere's embrace. i have no wish to show these vermin the glory of the centre but should they task me, i shall cleanse the sphere for the greater good.



i have grown restless in my youth, and yearn to explore the other spheres that cycle endlessly round the glowing centre of my world. i shall feed and i shall grow, as always, from the centre.

GOTHAM CITY

ARE YOU *SURE* HE'S COMING? I MEAN, *REALLY?*

YES. NOW SETTLE DOWN.

SORRY, SIR. IT'S JUST, Y'KNOW, *HE'S THE COOLEST.*

THERE HE IS!

HELLO THERE! YOU MUST BE ROBIN. I HEAR YOU'RE QUITE A CRIME BUSTER.

WOW! YOU REALLY DO KNOW HIM! HI, SUPERMAN!

ALL RIGHT, SON. NOW GIVE US A MOMENT. WE HAVE TO TALK.

DID YOU GET THAT ***MICROFILM*** I SENT YOU?

I DID. INCREDIBLY DISTURBING MATERIAL. IT LINES UP WITH DOZENS OF STORIES WE'VE RUN IN THE PLANET THE LAST YEAR. THE ***CHILDREN'S STORY*** WAS PARTICULARLY OMINOUS.

YOU SAY THAT SMIESEL KILLED HIMSELF AFTER FINISHING IT.

THAT'S RIGHT. IT IS OF INTEREST BECAUSE IT READS NOTHING LIKE SMIESEL'S OEUVRE.

ALMOST AS IF SOMETHING ***ELSE*** WAS SPEAKING ***THROUGH*** HIM.

WHATEVER THIS THING IS, IT'S OBVIOUSLY MONUMENTAL... AND IMMINENT.

SINCE I'M JUST A FEDERAL CRIMINAL WITH A CITY TO PROTECT, I THOUGHT I'D PASS THE BUCK ONTO YOUR BIG SHOULDERS.

LOOK, BRUCE, YOU KNOW HOW BAD I FEEL ABOUT THE FEDERAL LAW.

I KNOW, CLARK. IT'S WHY WE STAGED YOUR "DEFEAT" ALL THOSE YEARS AGO. FRANKLY, I DON'T CARE WHAT THEY CALL ME, AS LONG AS I'M FREE TO PROTECT MY CITY.

I KNOW YOU DON'T CARE, BUT... WELL *I CARE.* IT'S WRONG. FOR YEARS I'VE TRIED TO WORK AT CHANGE FROM WITHIN.

HOW DID YOU PUT IT? YOU ON THE OUTSIDE, ME ON THE INSIDE.

IT WILL CHANGE.

BUT WHEN?

SIMPLE. WHEN THEY NEED US, IT WILL CHANGE.

BRUCE, YOU'RE SUCH A CYNIC. WHICH BEGS THE QUESTION, WHAT'S WITH THE NEW LOOK AND THE SIDEKICK?

I SET OUT TO SCARE ***CRIMINALS,*** NOT CHILDREN. AS FOR THE BOY... WELL, I GUESS WE'RE JUST TWO LOST SOULS WHO FOUND EACH OTHER.

I'LL BE SEEING YOU, CLARK.

TAKE CARE, BRUCE.

PARADISE ISLAND

HOLA!

YYII!!!

YOU ARE SO CONCERNED WITH THE SWORD AND *ITS* BUSINESS, YOU DO NOT SEE ME POSITION MYSELF FOR THE FLIP.

HA! ONCE AGAIN, YOUR EYES BETRAY YOU.

WHAT DO YOU MEAN, PRINCESS?

NOW, GIRL, LET'S HAVE AT IT ONE MO-- *GREAT HERA!*

PRINCESS! WHAT IS IT?

NELLIS AIRFORCE BASE

NOW, I MAY BE WRONG, JOHN, BUT I GET THE IMPRESSION YOU HAVE THE ABILITY TO ESCAPE THIS CELL ***ANY TIME*** YOU PLEASE. WHY IS IT YOU STAY?

I ENJOY THIS GAME WE PLAY. THIS CHESS.

I'M CURIOUS. WHY ARE YOU NAMED KING? WERE YOU ***BORN*** TO ROYALTY?

OH YES. THE ***MAGICAL*** KINGDOM I GREW UP IN WAS CALLED THE SOUTH SIDE OF CHICAGO.

YOU ARE "RIBBING" ME AGAIN?

YEAH, I GET IT FROM MY OLD MAN. HE NAMED ME ***KING*** FARADAY. AS IN, "KING FOR A DAY." GET IT?

HA.

IT IS NOT VERY FUNNY.

NEITHER WAS THE OLD MAN.

NOW REALLY, JOHN, WHAT IS YOUR PLAN?

IT IS ***WE*** THAT NEED TO PLAN, KING. I FEEL THE MENACE GROW LARGER EVERY HOUR NOW.

IT BUSIES ITSELF IN THE BACK OF MY MIND, LIKE A CREATURE PREPARING TO STRIKE.

YOU DON'T HAVE TO CONVINCE ME, JOHN. THE REPORTS ARE COMING IN NOW ALMOST NONSTOP. IT'S LIKE THE ENTIRE COUNTRY IS EXPERIENCING SOME MASS DREAD.

COMBINING THAT WITH ALL OF YOURS AND PROFESSOR HALEY'S FINDINGS, IT'S SOMETHING BIG. IF WE COULD JUST PINPOINT THE SOURCE, WE'D KNOW WHAT WE'RE DEALING WITH.

THIS THING IS THE MOST POWERFUL CREATURE ON EARTH. WHEREVER IT IS, IT IS ALREADY HERE.

IT CAN'T BE AVOIDED.

IT MAY TAKE THE COMBINED EFFORTS OF ***ALL*** AMERICANS TO MEET THIS CHALLENGE.

IS YOUR GOVERNMENT.... ARE ***YOU...*** READY TO ACCEPT THAT?

IT IS YOUR MOVE, KING.

CAPE CANAVERAL, FLORIDA

CAPE TOWER, THIS IS CHALLENGER FIVE REQUESTING CLEARANCE.

RADAR MASKING OFF. VTOL JETS ENGAGED AND WARM.

HOW YOU DOING BACK THERE, LOIS?

FINE, PROFESSOR. DOES ANYONE ELSE HEAR THAT BUZZING NOISE?

ROGER THAT, MISS LANE. LIKE A HIVE OF WASPS OR SOMETH-- ***SWEET JESUS!***

MY GOD, PROFESSOR, LOOK AT THE SIZE OF THAT MONSTER!

UH... ACE. YOU CAN TURN AWAY ANY TIME NOW.

JIMMY, PLEASE TELL ME YOU'RE GETTING THIS.

THE BUZZING SOUNDS ARE NO LOUDER... THIS ISN'T THE SOURCE.

UH... WELL OBSERVED, PROF, BUT MAYBE YOU COULD THINK ABOUT HOW WE'RE GOING TO HANDLE THIS MONSTER.

ACE MORGAN! THIS IS CAPTAIN NATHANIEL ADAM! ACKNOWLEDGE!

NATE, YOU OLD DOG! LOOKS LIKE YOU BOYS HAVE A BIT OF A BIRD PROBLEM ON YOUR HANDS.

ACE, I LOVE YOU LIKE A BROTHER, BUT YOU HAVE TO CLEAR THE AREA.

AFTER THAT NONSENSE IN SPACE LAST WEEK, MY ORDERS ARE TO HAVE YOU BLOWN OUT OF THE SKY IF YOU INTERFERE. **BISHOP SIX** WILL HANDLE THIS.

BISHOP SIX? WHO THE HECK IS THIS BISHOP SIX?

THAT'S BISHOP SIX!

DANG!

AH, IT'S THAT SHOWOFF SUPERMAN.

EXCUSE ME, ROCKY, BUT DIDN'T THAT SHOWOFF PULL YOUR FAT OUT OF THE FIRE LAST WEEK?

HA! YOU TELL 'EM, JUNE.

HE'LL ***NEVER*** MOVE SOMETHING THAT BIG.

OH, HE'LL MOVE IT.

WHY SO SURE, OLSEN?

WELL JEEZ, ROCKY. HE'S ***SUPERMAN.***

BOOOM!

WHAT'D I TELL YOU? HE'S SUPERMAN.

INCREDIBLE! ACE, GET US DOWN THERE! I'VE GOT TO EXAMINE THIS CREATURE.

ROGER THAT, PROF. ANYONE ELSE NOTICE...? THAT DAMN BUZZING SOUND IS STILL THERE.

THE ATLANTIC

"WITHIN AND WITHOUT, ONE CASTS ALL ABOUT, FOR FEAR OF WHAT LIVES AT THE CENTRE."

LIKE THE SURFACE DWELLER'S "BOGEY MAN," ***ATLANTEAN MOTHERS*** WOULD USE THAT RHYME TO ***SCARE*** THIER CHILDREN. WE WERE TOLD TO BEHAVE OR WE'D BE SPIRITED AWAY BY ***THE CENTRE.***

ITS BEEN ON THE MOVE FOR WEEKS NOW, SLOWLY MAKING ITS WAY AROUND THE AMERICAS.

THE CENTRE'S CONSCIOUSNESS IS ***SO*** POWERFUL, THAT BROAD, ***HORRIFIC*** STROKES OF ITS INTENTIONS HAUNT MY MIND.

IT YEARNS TO REACH PAST EARTH'S BOUNDARIES, BUT THERE IS SOMETHING ***MORE...*** SOMETHING JUST OUT OF REACH OF MY PERCEPTION.

AT MY BACK, THE LARGEST ARMY IN THE WORLD. AHEAD OF US A THREAT SO VAST, IT COULD EXTERMINATE ***HALF*** OF MY BIRTHRIGHT.

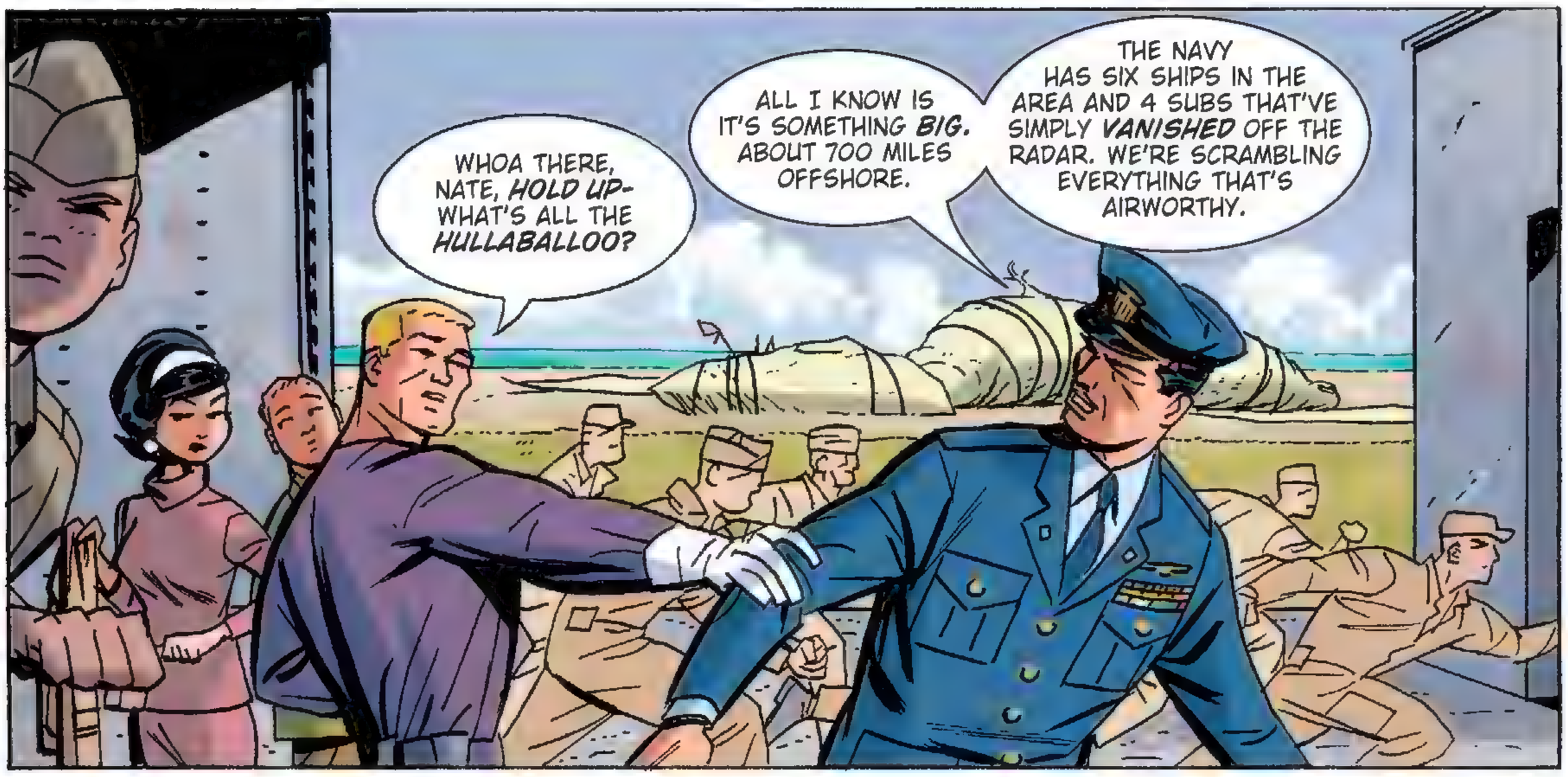
IT HAS NO QUARREL WITH MY KINGDOM, BUT THERE ARE THOSE ON WHICH IT HAS CAST ITS FANCY.

IT'S AFTER THE POISONERS. THE *MURDERERS.*

IT SEEKS TO CLEANSE *THE SURFACE.*

CHAPTER TWELVE

THE WAR THAT TIME FORGOT



LOOK, RED, QUIT HORSING AROUND. WE NEED YOU TO RECON THE ISLAND, ***THEN*** BRING THE WARSHIP OUT TO THE CAPE.

JUST ***DON'T HURT*** MY BABY.

SO NATE... I MEAN, ***CAPTAIN*** ADAM SAID THAT IF I WANTED TO SEE ***THE BEST*** IN ACTION, I SHOULD GO UP WITH ***YOU.***

LOIS LANE IN ***OUR*** CHOPPER? ***GOL DANG!***

--Y'KNOW WHAT I MEAN? IF ***DINO STEAKS*** CAUGHT ON, YOU'D ONLY HAVE TO CATCH ***ONE*** A YEAR. COULD HAVE A ***WHOLE*** CHAIN OF--

ROCKY, ***PLEASE.*** IS THAT A NEW KIND OF BUZZING I'M HEARING?

I KNOW THAT SOUND...IT'S A PROP PLANE. A P-51 MUSTANG.

DIANA!

WHAT ***THE HELL*** AM I SEEING?

HER PLANE IS ***INVISIBLE.*** SHE LOOKS HURT.

SHE'S TRYING TO LAND!

CHANG!

INCREDIBLE! SHE'S GOING TO MAKE THE AIRFIELD.

KRK-ENCH

DIANA...

HAVEN'T FLOWN THIS THING IN YEARS. GUESS I'M A LITTLE RUSTY.

MEDIC!

THE PACIFIC

SEE DICK. SEE JANE. SEE OLD RED FLY ACE'S PLANE.

--PERHAPS DOUBLE-CHECK THE COORDINATES.

I'M TELLING YOU, PROF, I BEEN OVER ***EVERY INCH*** OF THIS BIG BLUE. THERE'S NO ISLAND HERE, MIST OR OTHERWISE.

THIS IS ACE TO RED--YOU BETTER BE TREATING MY BABY WITH KID GLOVES, YOU HOT DOG.

ROGER THAT, BIG DADDY. I'M JUST ABOUT TO STOP AT TEXACO AND HAVE THEM DO THE WINDOWS AND CHECK THE OIL.

VERY FUNNY, HOT DOG. JUST GET HER TO THE CAPE IN ONE PIECE.

AYE, AYE, CAPTAIN BLIGH. RED OUT.

WELL, PROF, THAT RUINS YOUR THEORY.

IT MAKES NO SENSE. THAT ISLAND WAS THE ***ONLY*** LOGICAL SOURCE OF THESE MONSTERS.

WHAT IN DAMNATION? WHO LET THAT ***WOMAN*** ON THAT RECON CHOPPER?

--DON'T KNOW IF **ANYONE** IS PICKING UP THIS SIGNAL BUT WE'LL CONTINUE TO BROADCAST AS LONG AS WE CAN.

WHAT WE'RE ABOUT TO SHOW YOU--

GAAAAAH!

BOOM

HANG ON!

THIS ISN'T HAPPENING, THIS ISN'T--

CORPORAL, **SHUT UP AND PICK UP THAT CAMERA!**

YOU'LL GET THIS SHOT OR **I'LL THROW YOU OFF THIS GODDAMNED CHOPPER!**

NOW **STAND UP!**

I DON'T KNOW HOW CLEAR THIS IMAGE IS TO YOU... BUT THE ONLY WORD I CAN FIND TO DESCRIBE THE SCALE OF THIS SITUATION IS... **BIBLICAL.**

WHAT YOU'RE SEEING IS WHAT LOOKS TO BE A GIANT **REPTILIAN CREATURE.** ITS SCALE IS STAGGERING. AT THIS DISTANCE IT'S IMPOSSIBLE TO SAY FOR SURE, BUT IT HAS TO BE AT LEAST **25 MILES ACROSS.**

IT'S TRANSMITTING SOME KIND OF MENTAL INTERFERENCE... A SICKENING BUZZING THAT MAKES IT **HARD** TO THINK... UH, CLEARLY.

THE ENTIRE SURFACE OF THIS MONSTROSITY IS **BRISTLING** WITH SMALLER LIFE FORMS THAT ATTACK WITH DEADLY ACCURACY. L-L... LARGE VACULUM-LIKE PORTS ALTERNATELY DISCHARGE INTENSE BLASTS OF ENERGY OR... OH JESUS... OR THEY CAN ALSO PULL **EVERYTHING** IN ITS PATH UP INTO ITSELF.

NOT TWO MINUTES AGO, WE WATCHED IT PULL UP AN AIRCRAFT CARRIER **LIKE AN ANT.** THE LOSS OF LIFE IS... HEARTBREAKING. OUR PLANES, OUR SHIPS, MISSILES... ARE NOTHING BUT **FOOD** FOR THIS HORROR.

DEAR GOD! THE PORT ON THE TOP SIDE JUST DISCHARG-- WAIT, WHAT'S HAPPENING? WHY ARE WE TURNING AROUND?

THAT'S IT. WE'RE GETTING OUT OF HERE NOW!

YOU COWARDS! TURN BACK THERE! WE ARE **NOT** LEAVING-- **CCLLLLIKKK!** KZZZT.

-- AND **THAT** IS THE SCENE OFF THE COAST OF FLORIDA. IT'S BEEN AN HOUR SINCE THAT BROADCAST, AND REPORTS HAVE BEEN **POURING** IN FROM ALL OVER THE COUNTRY.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

DANGER IS OUR BUSINESS

A MENACE OF **EPIC PROPORTIONS** BEARING DOWN ON UNITED STATES SOIL. EXPERTS ESTIMATE ITS SIZE AS ROUGHLY TWO THIRDS THAT OF MANHATTAN ISLAND.

AUTHORITIES ARE URGING ALL RESIDENTS OF FLORIDA TO **EVACUATE** THE STATE **IMMEDIATELY.** MILITIA AND COAST GUARD CREWS ARE WORKING TIRELESSLY TO ENSURE THE EXODUS IS AS ORDERLY AS POSSIBLE.

BUT THE QUESTION ON EVERYONE'S LIPS IS, **WILL THAT BE ENOUGH?** HOW CAN WE STOP SOMETHING THAT LARGE... THAT **OMNIPOTENT?**

THE WHITE HOUSE HASN'T ISSUED A FORMAL STATEMENT YET, AND THAT IS LEADING TO SPECUALTION ABOUT A POSSIBLE **NUCLEAR RESPONSE.**

I KNOW BARRY.

SWEET MOSES.

IRIS... IRIS HONEY, WHERE'D YOU GO? THERE'S SOMETHING I WANT TO TELL YOU.

YOU KNOW? WHAT DO Y-- W-WHERE'D YOU GET THAT THING?

BARRY, ***PLEASE.*** I'M AN INVESTIGATIVE REPORTER.

AND YOU. I ***KNOW*** YOU.

DARLING, I QUIT THAT, BECAUSE.. ***WELL,*** FOR US.

SO YOU WOULDN'T BE MARRYING A CRIMINAL. SO I WOULDN'T HAVE TO HIDE SUCH A BIG SECRET FROM YOU.

YOU DON'T HAVE TO HIDE FROM ME, BARRY ALLEN.

AND YOU CAN'T HIDE FROM YOURSELF. YOU'VE BEEN BLESSED WITH THIS ABILITY AND YOU WANT TO USE IT TO HELP PEOPLE. GOD, I LOVE YOU ***SO*** TRUE, I-- I...

YOU GO DOWN THERE, BABY, AND YOU SHOW THEM WHAT I ALREADY KNOW.

YOU'RE NO QUITTER. YOU'RE ***MY HERO.***

NELLIS AIRFORCE BASE

IT HAS BECOME IMPOSSIBLE TO MASK THE MENTAL IMAGES THIS LEVIATHAN IS TRANSMITTING. ITS POWER, ITS MAGNITUDE HAVE A VASTNESS THAT BENDS MY ABILITY TO COMPREHEND.

I SENSE KING'S APPROACH FAR LATER THAN NORMAL.

JOHN-- I'M GOING TO TAKE MY FLYBOYS OUT TO THE CAPE, SEE IF WE CAN'T HELP MOUNT SOME KIND OF COUNTERATTACK.

I THOUGHT YOU MIGHT LIKE TO COME ALONG FOR THE RIDE.

FARADAY, DON'T BE SUCH A ***DIMWITTED FOOL.*** I TOO AM RECEIVING PREMONITIONS. ***I HAVE BEEN TO THIS ISLAND!***

FARADAY!

DO I LOOK ***RETARDED*** TO YOU, ***SAVAGE?*** SHUT UP OR I'LL HAVE THEM GAS YOU TWICE AN HOUR FROM NOW ON.

KING, IT OCCURS TO ME...

...THE LAST TIME I APPEARED IN FRONT OF SOMEONE SUDDENLY, THEY DIED OF FRIGHT.

I THOUGHT I SHOULD ALTER MY APPEARANCE, BUT I DON'T WANT TO PRETEND I'M HUMAN ANY-MORE.

THIS IS ***FASCINATING,*** JOHN, BUT IF YOU COULD GET TO THE POINT--

PERHAPS I COULD TAKE A ***FRIENDLIER*** APPEARANCE, AND BE MORE LIKE THE HERO SUPERMAN.

SUIT YOURSELF, JOHN. BUT REAL MEN WEAR PANTS, Y'KNOW?

HOW ABOUT THIS?

NOW YOU'RE TALKING! GIVE ME A SEC, HERE.

AIRMAN STONE, OPEN THE TRANSPORT BAY DOORS AND THEN PREP OUR BETTY... OH, AND HAVE THEM GAS SAVAGE ***TWICE*** AN HOUR 'TIL WE GET BACK.

ROGER THAT, KING.

BASTARD!

KING, I FEAR THIS MONSTER HAS A ***DEEP*** HOLD ON MY MIND.

IT WOULD BE BEST TO WATCH ME CAREFULLY.

DANGER

STAND CLEAR

THAT'S WHAT I DO, JOHN. ANYWAY, ***CHEER UP.***

I DON'T FIGURE EITHER OF US WILL BE ALIVE THIS TIME TOMORROW.

GREEN ARROW

--EPIDEMIC OF HYSTERIA SWEEPING THE NATION.

THE SEA DEVILS

ALL OVER AMERICA BRAVE INDIVIDUALS ARE ANSWERING THE CALL AND MAKING THIER WAY TO CAPE CANAVERAL--

BLACKHAWKS

THE SIGHT OF WHAT COULD BE AMERICA'S GREATEST BATTLE.

CALIFORNIA DESERT

THE *INCIDENT* WITH THE MOUNTAIN SHOOK ME UP PRETTY BAD. I GUESS I WANTED TO HIDE OUT FOR A WHILE, TRY TO MAKE SENSE OF ALL THIS GREEN LANTERN STUFF.

ONE THING'S ***FOR SURE.*** NO MORE HOT-DOGGING WITH THAT RING UNTIL THEY CONTACT ME THROUGH THE LANTERN. WHOEVER ***THEY*** ARE.

OFFICE

MOTEL

TO KILL SOME TIME, I TURN ON THE TV.

*-- ALL NATIONS ARE ON HEIGHTENED **NUCLEAR ALERT,** BUT REPORTS OUT OF WASHINGTON ARE THAT THE RUSSIANS HAVE BEEN INFORMED AND ARE WILLING TO WAIT AND SEE IF THERE IS AN OPTION TO A NUCLEAR STRIKE.*

*ONCE AGAIN, THE FOOTAGE SHOT BY THE AIR FORCE WITH LOIS LANE. WE WARN OUR VIEWERS, THIS MAY NOT BE SUITABLE FOR **YOUNGER** OR **SENSITIVE** VIEWERS.*

I WATCH THE REPORT. THOUSANDS ALREADY DEAD, THE AIR FORCE CRIPPLED.

GREEN MEN, RED MEN, MAGIC RINGS, MONSTERS, LOIS LANE AND JIMMY OLSEN IN A HELICOPTER... I'M BEGINNING TO WONDER IF THE ENTIRE LAST WEEK IS SOME KIND OF ***WILD HALLUCINATION*** I'VE BEEN HAVING.

BUT THEN AGAIN... IS THIS MONSTER THE REASON ABIN SUR WAS COMING TO EARTH?

NOTHING LIKE A CALL TO ACTION TO ***CLEAR THE CRAP*** OUT OF YOUR HEAD. I HAVE TO GET BACK, ***PRONTO.***

FERRIS AIRCRAFT

ALL RIGHT, TOM, ***YOU'RE CLEAR.*** START TO CUT THE WHEEL.

ARE YOU ***SURE*** MISS FERRIS OKAYED THIS, JORDAN?

OH, I'M SURE. AS A MATTER OF FACT, I'LL BET SHE COMES OUT TO ***SEE ME OFF*** PERSONALLY.

HAL JORDAN, YOU LOW-DOWN ***SON OF A BITCH!***

SEE? THERE SHE IS NOW.

WHERE THE ***HELL*** HAVE YOU BEEN? AND WHERE THE ***HELL*** IS MY SIMULATOR? AND WHERE THE ***HELL*** DO YOU THINK YOU'RE GOING WITH MY PROTOTYPE?

CAROL, I REALLY DON'T HAVE THE TIME TO EXPLAIN. YOU'LL HAVE TO TRUST ME.

TRUST YOU? ***TRUST YOU?*** THAT'S ALL I'VE EVER ***DONE*** IS TRUST YOU, HAL! AND WHAT DO I GET?

YOU SCREW UP THE MISSION, YOU DISAPPEAR FOR A DAY AND A HALF AFTER DESTROYING THE SIMULATOR ROOM, AND--AND ***NOW,*** WITH THAT THING DOWN IN FLORIDA, YOU'RE JUST GOING TO ***RUN AWA--***

OH GOD.

THAT'S IT, ISN'T IT? YOU'RE GOING DOWN THERE.

HAL THE PACIFIST IS GOING DOWN THERE TO GET KILLED BY ***THAT*** THING.

WHAT WOULD YOU HAVE ME DO? OR DO YOU THINK I'M A COWARD AS WELL?

LET ME TELL YOU SOMETHING MISS RICH BITCH, DID YOU EVER STOP TO THINK THAT I SIMPLY ***DIDN'T BELIEVE*** THAT WHAT WE DID IN KOREA WAS WORTH KILLING OVER?

FIRE IN THE HOLE!

KAPOOM

BUT KOREA FORCED ME TO FIND OUT WHAT ***WOULD*** MAKE ME KILL. SURVIVAL.

I WOULD KILL TO ***SURVIVE.***

TODAY, ON THE TELEVISION, WHEN I ***SAW IT...*** WELL, I COULD FEEL IT ***INSIDE*** MY HEAD. WE ***HAVE*** TO KILL THIS THING IF WE'RE TO SURVIVE.

I'LL BE SEEING YOU, CAROL.

HAL, WAIT! I KNOW YOU'RE NOT A COWARD, JUST THINK THIS THROUGH. MAYBE YOU SHOULD CALL ACE AND--

AND WHAT, HE CAN BE MY DAD AND THINK FOR ME?

EITHER WAY IT WOULDN'T MATTER. I'M SURE HE'S ALREADY AT THE CAPE.

AREN'T YOU AT LEAST GOING TO SAY GOODBYE? DON'T YOU-- YOU--

THE JETS ARE LOUD ENOUGH TO DROWN OUT ANY REMAINING PROTESTS OF CAROL'S. I GET READY TO HOOK UP, AND I STEAL ONE LAST LOOK AT HER.

IF I *AM* A COWARD, IT'S IN THE MATTERS OF THE HEART. THE NOISE OF THE JETS ISN'T ENOUGH FOR ME. I WAIT 'TIL MY HELMETS ON BEFORE I SAY IT.

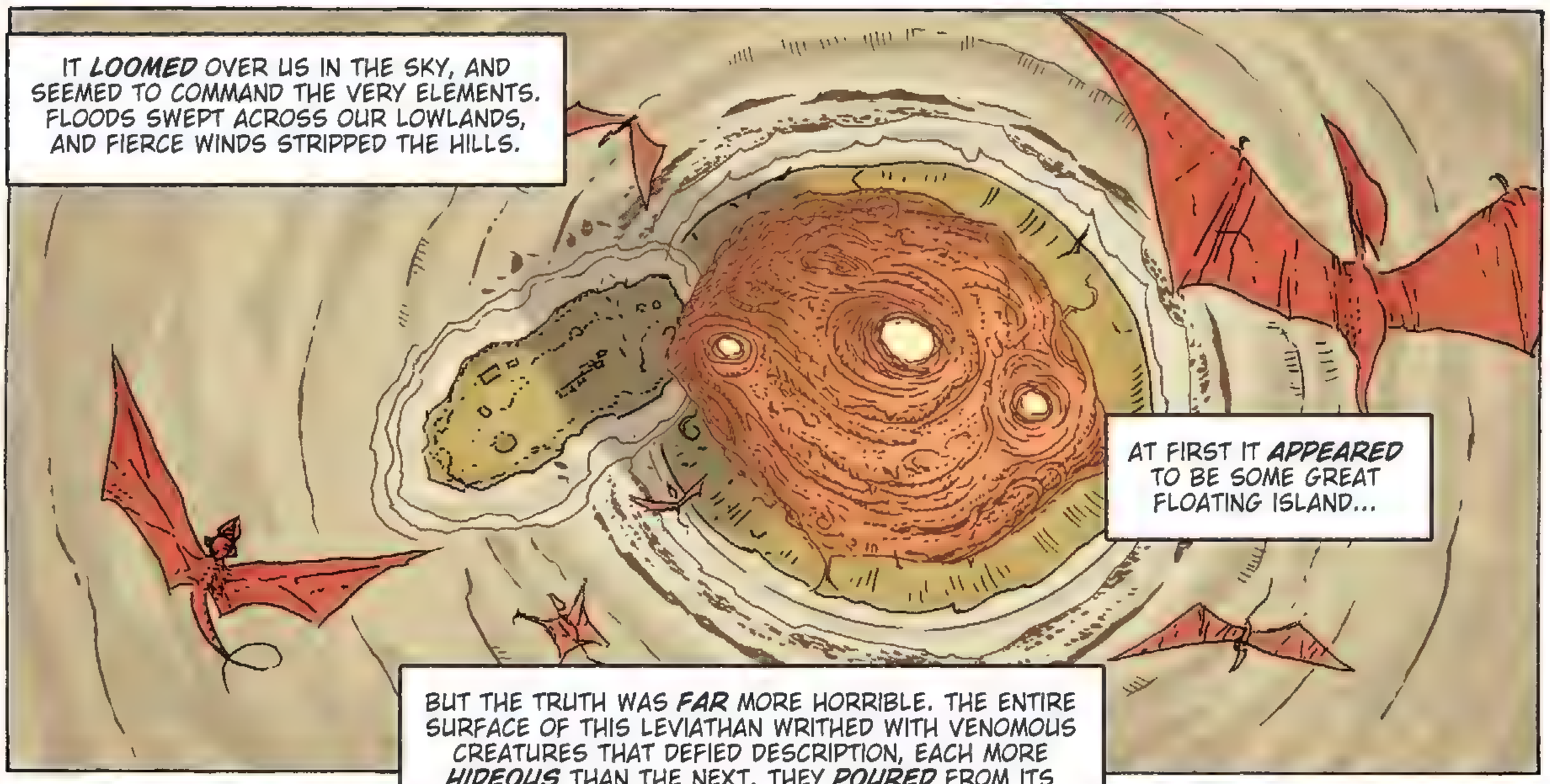
I LOVE YOU, CAROL.

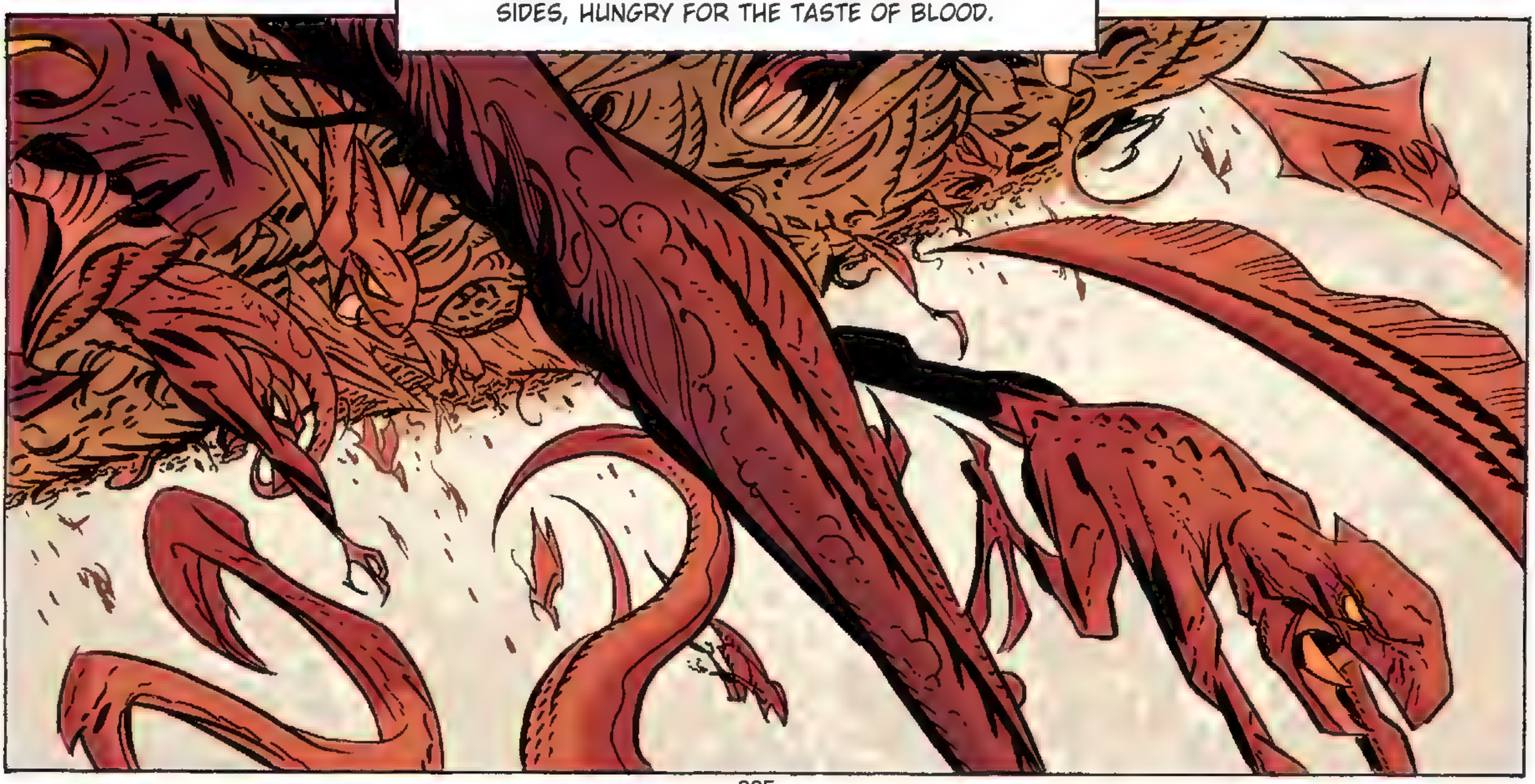
HIGHBALL

THEY'RE JUST WORDS ANYWAY, AND THE TIME FOR WORDS IS *GONE.*

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

THE BOY SCOUT'S LAST





AND THEY FOUND IT. MY SISTERS FOUGHT WITH RIGHTEOUS FURY, BUT THIER NUMBERS WERE IMMEASURABLE.

IT WAS GONE AS QUICKLY AS IT CAME. OUR IDYLLIC SOUTHLANDS HAD BEEN DESTROYED AS NOTHING BUT A DISTRACTION.

THIS MONSTROSITY HAD A FAR ***GRANDER*** DESTINATION.

IT'S ON ITS WAY ***HERE,*** KAL. I HAD TO WARN YOU. IT'S TOO BIG TO STOP ALONE. TO DEFEAT THIS, YOU'LL ALL HAVE TO COME TOGETHER... FOR THE ***GREATER*** GOOD.

IT IS ***YOU*** THAT MUST LEAD THEM, KAL.

THERE'S THE DOOR... SPACEMAN.

DIANA!

UP YOURS, SERGEANT ROCK.

IT'S CAPTAIN ADAM, ***PINHEAD.*** TELL ME, WHAT ARE YOU GONNA DO, PINKO, SHOOT IT WITH YOUR LITTLE ARROWS?

THAT'S FUNNY, JUGHEAD, BUT I DIDN'T SEE ***YOU*** FLY HERE IN A ***SEVEN MILLION DOLLAR PLANE*** YOU BOUGHT WITH YOUR OWN MONEY.

KRAKKAAA!

ALL RIGHT JERK, IT'S TIME I SHOWED YOU THAT'S NO WAY TO SPEAK TO THE CAPTA-- WHAAAAA?

HEY!

BOOOOMMM

WHOA!!

I SEE I HAVE YOUR ATTENTION.

GOOD.

THIS IS GOING TO STOP, *HERE AND NOW.*

WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO THIS COUNTRY OF OURS?

WE'RE ***ALL*** HERE TO HELP FIGHT THIS THING, TO PROTECT OUR HOMELAND. WE ***KNOW*** IT WILL BE THE CHALLENGE OF OUR LIVES AND STILL, ***WE BICKER*** BACK AND FORTH ABOUT A MASK OR A UNIFORM.

MY BEST FRIEND IS LYING UPSTAIRS RIGHT NOW. SHE WOULD HAVE GIVEN HER ***LAST BREATH*** FOR THIS COUNTRY, AND SHE MAY YET.

I COULD HARDLY LOOK HER IN THE EYE.

THIS COUNTRY WAS FOUNDED ON THE NOTION THAT A PERSON SHOULD BE ***FREE*** TO FOLLOW THEIR DESTINY.

MANY OF US HERE HAVE DEVOTED OUR LIVES TO ***DEFENDING*** THAT FREEDOM. MANY WHO WOULD BE HERE TONIGHT GAVE THEIR LIVES FOR THAT GRAND NOTION.

SO TONIGHT, THAT'S WHAT I INTEND TO DO. FOLLOW ***MY DESTINY.***

I WILL NO LONGER BE PARTY TO ***ANY*** FORM OF OPPRESSION OR PERSECUTION.

I WILL NOT COUNTENANCE ***ANY*** EVILS THAT THREATEN THE CONSTITUTIONAL FREEDOMS OF THIS GREAT NATION'S PEOPLE, WHETHER THEY COME FROM OUTSIDE OR WITHIN.

IT IS MY DESTINY... ***MY GOAL,*** TO TAKE PART IN RECLAIMING THIS COUNTRY. FOR FREE MEN AND WOMEN ***EVERYWHERE.***

AND I KNOW IN YOUR HEARTS THAT ***YOU*** ALL WANT THIS TOO.

IT SOUNDS GREAT TO ME, BIG GUY, BUT WHAT WILL YOUR GOVERNMENT PALS THINK?

WHY DON'T YOU ***SHUT*** YOUR MOUTH?

TAKE IT EASY, NATE. IT'S A FAIR QUESTION.

IT CERTAINLY IS.

I WAS AT SOME DIPLOMATIC PARTY ONCE. GOT TO TALKING TO THIS PRINCESS WHO TOLD ME THAT WHEN IT CAME TO SUPERMAN, I WAS MISSING THE POINT. SHE TOLD ME "HIS REAL STRENGTH LAY IN HIS GENEROUS SPIRIT AND SENSE OF WHAT'S FAIR."

WELL, THAT PRINCESS IS LYING UPSTAIRS NOW, AND I THINK WE ***OWE IT TO HER*** TO BACK YOUR PLAY.

WE ARE SO CLOSE TO THE CENTRE NOW... IT TAKES EVERYTHING I HAVE TO KEEP MY MIND CLEAR ENOUGH TO STAND STRAIGHT AND MAINTAIN THIS SHAPE.

BY THE WAY, SUPERMAN, ALLOW ME TO INTRODUCE AMERICA'S NEWEST "LANDED" IMMIGRANT. THIS IS JOHN JONES. HE'S FROM ***MARS.***

ER... A PLEASURE MR... JONES

LIKEWISE, SIR. I GREATLY ENJOY YOUR ANIMATED ADVENTURES AT THE CINEMA.

HIS HANDSHAKE IS LIKE A BALM FOR MY TROUBLED MIND. SO CALM AND CONFIDENT. SO PROUD OF THESE PEOPLE HE'S WITH.

SEEING SUPERMAN AND KING TOGETHER ON THIS...THEY'RE READY NOW. HE TURNS TO ADDRESS THEM AGAIN, HIS VOICE CHARGED WITH EMOTION.

ALL OF YOU! LISTEN TO ME--

I'M GOING TO FLY OUT AND RECON THIS THING, SEE IF THERE'S ANY CHANCE OF COMMUNICATING WITH IT.

BUT I'M ***NOT*** OPTIMISTIC. WE ALL FEEL ITS OMINOUS PRESENCE IN OUR VERY MINDS. WHATEVER THIS THING IS, IT ***CAN'T*** DEFEAT US. THERE ARE TOO MANY PEOPLE DEPENDING ON US.

ITS UP TO US TO STOP IT, ***WHATEVER*** IT TAKES.

WHO'S WITH ME?!!

THEY ANSWER HIM AS ONE. AND WITH A SMILE AND A WAVE, HE'S GONE.

MY MARTIAN MIND IS ODDLY CROSS-CONNECTED BETWEEN THE TWO OF THEM.

THE CENTRE'S PRESENCE PERCOLATES IN MY CONSCIOUS MIND NOW, BUT I CAN SEE SUPERMAN AS WELL, A BRIGHT BLUE ARROW KNIFING THROUGH THE MURK.

WOOF!

SEVERAL OF THE CREATURES DETACH AND ATTACK HIM. HE GAUGES THIER STRENGTH AND THEN DISPATCHES THEM WITH DUE SPEED.

A SPLIT SECOND BEFORE IT HAPPENS, HE KNOWS THE ATTACK WAS SIMPLY A DISTRACTION.

IT IS LIKE USING AN ATOMIC BOMB TO SNUFF OUT A CANDLE.

MY MIND EXPLODES INTO ALIZARIN FLOWERS OF PAIN.

SHARED PAIN..
CONFUSION...

...THEN NOTHING.

NOTHING BUT
DARKNESS.

THE MOON

WITH SO MUCH AT STAKE, IS THIS PRUDENT?

I FEAR THAT WE HAVE NO CHOICE. IF THE *PHANTOM STRANGER* SEEKS AN AUDIENCE, THIS IS A GRAVE SITUATION INDEED.

THERE-- HIS HERALDS BECKON US.

I AM ALL MANNER OF FOOL, DR. FATE.

KARKUL'S FANCY! WHAT MANNER OF FOOL IS THIS STRANGER?

FORGIVE ME... I CANNOT SEEM TO RESIST THE OPPORTUNITY TO INDULGE MY SENSE OF OCCASION.

THIS HARDLY SEEMS THE TIME FOR A BANQUET.

OH PLEASE, DOCTOR. I HAVE VERY LITTLE PATIENCE WITH SANCTIMONY. AND IF YOU MUST BE MELODRAMATIC, AT LEAST TRY FOR A LITTLE IRONY.

THE *CENTRE* LOOMS OVER HUMANITY, *STRANGER.* YOUR POINT, PLEASE.

INDEED. FORGIVE MY TONE, BUT MAKE HASTE.

VERY WELL, GENTLEMEN. MAY I INTRODUCE THE WITCH *ZATANNA,* AND THE MORTAL VESSEL FOR THE ONE YOU CALL CAPTAIN MARVEL, *BILLY BATSON.*

WE FIVE ARE SPIRITUALLY INFORMED.

WE POSSESS MYSTIC FORCES THAT COULD PERHAPS DEFEAT THE CENTRE.

THE QUESTION WE FACE IS NOT WHETHER OUR CONSIDERABLE POWERS COULD AID IN THE COMING CONFLAGRATION... CAPTAIN MARVEL AND THE JUSTICE SOCIETY WOULD DOUBTLESS HELP TO WIN THE DAY.

THE QUESTION IS WHETHER THAT WOULD ACTUALLY HELP THE FORCES OF GOOD, OR HINDER IT.

TO THE MORTALS, WE REPRESENT AN OLD WAY.

HOW I AM SEEN BY MAN IS NOT RELEVANT. I AM DUTY BOUND TO HELP COMBAT THIS HORROR.

AGREED. FOR SEVERAL YEARS WE HAVE AVOIDED THE AFFAIRS OF MAN, BUT THIS SITUATION *DEMANDS* WE INTERVENE.

AND THAT IS THE PROBLEM, PERHAPS. ALWAYS JUMPING IN UNINVITED. FURTHERMORE, *DOCTOR,* WITH ALL DUE RESPECT...

...YOU AND YOUR CONTEMPORARIES HAD YOUR CHANCE. FACED WITH SOMETHING AS FACILE AS THE FICKLENESS OF POPULAR OPINION, YOU ***PROUDLY*** WALKED AWAY.

MANKIND NEEDS A NEW ROAD TO TRAVEL, CARVED BY THE HEROES OF TOMORROW. IF THE CENTRE IS TO BE DEFEATED, IT WILL BE BY THESE NEW HEROES.

IT WILL BE SEVERAL MILLENNIA UNTIL MANKIND TRANSCENDS SCIENCE AND FINDS THE TRUE NATURE OF EXISTENCE, BUT ***THAT*** IS THE ORDER OF THINGS.

YOUR REFLECTIONS CARRY GREAT WISDOM, STRANGER. BUT SHOULD THESE NEOPHYTES FAIL, THE EARTH MAY BE FORFEIT.

COME NOW, SPECTRE. IT WOULD SIMPLY MEAN THE END OF ***MANKIND*** AT THE CENTRE'S HAND. LIFE ON EARTH WOULD GO ON. AND YOU KNOW I WOULD NOT TELL YOU THESE THINGS WERE THEY NOT TRUE. AT THE RISK OF SOUNDING THE SENTIMENTAL OLD SPOOK, LET US HAVE A LITTLE FAITH.

I'VE GOT A HEADACHE.

STOP WOLFING YOUR ICE CREAM, BILLY.

YES, MISS ZATANNA.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN
SHALL EARTH ENDURE?

HE IS GONE.

AMERICA'S GREATEST CHAMPION, THE MIGHTY SUPERMAN, WENT DOWN IN DEFEAT SEVERAL HOURS AGO.

THIS REPORTER WAS WITNESS TO HIS FLAMING BODY BEING SWALLOWED UP BY THE ATLANTIC. AN EXHAUSTIVE SEARCH HAS LEFT NO SIGN OF HIS HAVING SURVIVED HIS BATTLE WITH THE CENTRE.

HERE AT THE CAPE, THE GREATEST MINDS IN THE FREE WORLD HAVE BUSIED THEMSELVES WITH THE TASK OF MAPPING OUT A PLAN TO STOP THIS MONSTER BEFORE IT REACHES THE COAST.

IT IS IMPORTANT THAT WE REMAIN HOPEFUL AT THIS HOUR, AND THAT ALL CITIZENS WITHIN THE EVACUATION AREA CONTINUE TO LEAVE IN AN ORDERLY FASHION.

WE CANNOT LET PANIC... WE CANNOT--

CANNOT LET OUR ENORMOUS SENSE OF LOSS--

GOD DAMMIT!

TURN IT OFF!

C'MON, YOU HEARD HER. SHUT THE BLAMED THING OFF.

AHH, THE GRIEVING WOMAN, MOONING OVER HER LOST HERO. LOOKS LIKE IT'S TIME FOR A LITTLE OF THE OLD SYMPATHY TACTIC.

ROCKY DAVIS, LADIES' MAN. WHAT AN ASS.

DON'T YOU KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT WOMEN?

SHE *LOVED* HIM, YOU IDIOT. SHE LOVED HIM.

WAYNE ENTERPRISES

--AND IN A JOINT VENTURE WITH LEXCO, WE ARE ROUTING ALL AVAILABLE MATERIEL AND AIRCRAFT AT OUR DISPOSAL TO THE SOUTH ATLANTIC.

ARKHAM ASYLUM

I SEE NOW WHY THE GOVERNMENT WAS OBSESSED WITH YOU. YOU WERE RIGHT ALL ALONG.

I HOPE YOU CAN FORGIVE US. HAVE YOU A WAY TO DEFEAT THIS THING?

I JUST MIGHT. TAKE CARE, DR. THOMPKINS. AND THANKS FOR LETTING ME KEEP THE MAGAZINE.

RURAL ARKANSAS

DANGED PIECE OF JUNK.

DANGED ESKIMO MECHANIC.

GOL-DANGED CORNFIELD.

IT WOULD APPEAR THE SAUCER STILL HAS A FEW BUGS IN ITS FUEL SYSTEM. OR SOMETHING.

I'VE KILLED PRECIOUS HOURS TRYING TO FIX THIS CRATE. LOOKS LIKE THERE'S ONLY ONE RIDE TO THE CAPE TONIGHT.

"YOU WILL BE CONTACTED THROUGH THE BATTERY."

SORRY, ***ABIN,*** BUT I'VE RUN OUT OF TIME ***AND*** OPTIONS.

THE BATTERY IS EVER PRESENT. I SIMPLY SUMMON IT, AND IT MATERIALIZES. I CHARGE THE RING AND IT IS A SPECTACULAR SIGHT.

IT FEELS... SOLEMN. LIKE I SHOULD BE SAYING SOMETHING PITHY AND HEROIC.

ALL RIGHT, RING, HERE IS THE DEAL. YOU ARE TO POWER THE AIRCRAFT AND WEAPONS SYSTEMS ***ONLY.*** SHOULD MY THOUGHTS BECOME IMPULSIVE AND SUGGEST OTHERWISE, PLEASE REFER TO THIS BASELINE DIRECTIVE.

SO NO HOT-DOGGING UNLESS OUR FAT IS REALLY IN THE FIRE.

I MEAN TO SAY, UNLESS WE ARE IN MORTAL DANGER, YOUR PURPOSE IS STRICTLY OPERATIONAL AND RESTRICTED TO THE AIRCRAFT. NOW ***GIDDYUP!***

SUFFERIN' SUZIE! I LOVE YOU, RING.

INDIANA SUBURBS

KNOCK KNOCK

MIC AGE PRODIGY

AY PALMER: ATOMIC AGE PRODIGY

CIENTIFIC AMERICAN

RAY PALMER?

LMER: ATOMIC AGE PRODIGY

TIFIC

MY NAME IS ***ADAM STRANGE.*** I REALIZE I MUST LOOK A SIGHT TO YOU, SHOWING UP AS I HAVE AT THIS HOUR, IN THIS UNIFORM. I FEAR I MUST SIDESTEP THE PLEASANTRIES AND JUMP TO THE ***PURPOSE*** OF MY MISSION.

I'VE READ ABOUT YOUR ***INVENTION*** FOR SHRINKING MATTER AND FEEL IT MAY HELP WITH THE ***SITUATION*** DOWN IN FLORIDA.

BUT MY DEVICE IS ***FLAWED.*** IT DOESN'T WORK PROPERLY.

EXACTLY.

PROFESSOR PALMER, HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO HELP SAVE THE WORLD?

I APPRECIATE THE HELP, JUNE.

JOHN IS VERY SUSCEPTIBLE TO ***TELEPATHIC ATTACK***, BUT HIS LINK TO THE CENTRE COULD BE VALUABLE. CAN I GET YOU A COFFEE?

NO THANKS, KING. THE POOR... MARTIAN. HE'S STRUGGLING AGAINST SOMETHING VERY POWERFUL.

TURTLESHELL VIKING...

I'VE FOUND THAT THE ONLY WAY TO STAY CLEAR OF IT WAS TO STAY LOCAL, AND KEEP MY REAL IDENTITY A SECRET. SAME AS YOU, I SUPPOSE.

I'M LUCKY. MY GIRL FOUND OUT ABOUT IT, AND SHE'S STICKING BY ME.

SOME NIGHT, EH? LOOK, UH... FLASH--THAT ***THING*** IN CENTRAL CITY BETWEEN US--

NO HARD FEELINGS, HEY?

KRAK!

NONE AT ALL.

HA!

CANTEEN

ADAM, *LOOK!* IT'S THE ILLINOIS FLASH!

CAN YOU TELL US WHERE WE CAN FIND PROFESSOR HALEY?

JUST ASK THE JERK PICKING HIMSELF UP OFF THE FLOOR IN THERE.

THE PROBLEM IS SCALE. THE CENTRE'S SIZE IS SUCH THAT NOTHING WE HAVE WILL DENT IT.

SURFACE DETONATION OF ATOMIC WEAPONS WOULD YIELD NEGLIGIBLE RESULTS AND CONTAMINATE OUR ATMOSPHERE. IT MAY EVEN TRIGGER A RASH RESPONSE FROM THE RUSSIANS--

PROFESSOR.

FOR ALL I KNOW, THESE TWO ARE JUST A COUPLE OF CRAZIES.

BUT HEY, WHAT HAVE WE GOT TO LOSE. THIS IS ***ADAM STRANGE,*** ALLEGED INTERSTELLAR TRAVELER...

AND SCIENTIST ***RAY PALMER.*** PALMER CLAIMS YOU WROTE A PAPER ABOUT HIM, DR. MAGNUS.

RAY PALMER? YES, FANTASTIC BREAK-THROUGHS IN MATTER REDUCTION USING A LENS HEWN FROM A WHITE DWARF STAR.

ISN'T THE PROCESS FLAWED REGARDING MATTER INTEGRITY AFTER REDUCTION?

EXACTLY!

GREAT. NOW I'M PUNCHING GOVERNMENT AGENTS. WHY IS EVERYTHING SO... SMALL?

I'M TIRED OF USING MY GIFT TO CHASE JEWELRY THIEVES AND COSTUMED CLOWNS.

I CAME HERE TO BE PART OF SOMETHING... MEANINGFUL.

HELL OF A RIGHT YOU'VE GOT THERE, KID.

WHAT DO YOU WANT, FARADAY?

I WANT YOU TO PUT THE PERSONAL ASIDE AND WORK WITH ME.

THESE EGGHEADS HAVE A PRETTY ***WILD IDEA***, BUT IT KIND OF COMES DOWN TO ***YOU.***

TELL ME FLASH, HOW FAST ARE YOU?

WATCH MY SMOKE, G-MAN.

THE TARGET HAS BEEN NOTED IN SEVERAL SPOTTY ACCOUNTS SINCE 1944. ITS OLD O.S.S. CODE NAME WAS *THE THE LAND THAT TIME FORGOT.*

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

THE DAWN PATROL

ALTHOUGH THE CREATURES ON THE CENTRE'S SURFACE HAVE BEEN DOCUMENTED, NOTABLY BY THE LATE ***RICK FLAGG***, THE FACT THAT THE ISLAND IS A ***LIVING THING*** WITH SUCH DEVASTATING POWER IS NEWS TO ALL OF US.

ALL WE KNOW IS THAT SO FAR, CONVENTIONAL TACTICS AND ***SUPERMAN*** HIMSELF HAVE FAILED.

THE FOLLOWING TWO-STAGE PLAN IS OUR LAST, BEST CHANCE TO DEFEAT THE CENTRE.

THE 'CENTRE' AKA DINOSAUR ISLAND

ORGANIC SENTIENT ISLAND

LISTEN UP FLYBOYS, 'CAUSE WE ARE STAGE ONE. THE PLAN IS TO CONCENTRATE A DIRECT ATTACK WITH WHAT PLANES WE HAVE AS A DIVERSION.

THE BLACKHAWKS ATTACK OUT OF THE SUN FROM THE OTHER SIDE.

WHILE IT'S DISTRACTED, THE IDEA IS TO SNEAK A COUPLE BOMBERS LOADED WITH ATOMIC WARHEADS INSIDE THE BLAMED THING. TRY TO HURT IT, SLOW IT UP.

DROP THE PAYLOAD, OUT THE OTHER SIDE AND BOOM.

MAIN STRIKE

ARTILLERY

BLACKHAWKS

WEAPONS PAYLOAD

TAKE

MASSIVE 'EXHAUST'

A LOT OF THESE LADS WON'T BE COMING BACK. THEY DESERVE TO KNOW WHY WE'RE DOING THIS.

AMEN, BROTHER.

TRAINOR

THAT'S PART OF STAGE TWO.

AFTER WE SLOW THE MONSTER UP, THINGS GET A LITTLE KOOKY. I'LL HAND IT OVER TO PROFESSOR HALEY.

THIS IS RAY PALMER. THE DEVICE HE'S PREPPING IS A MARVEL IN MATTER TECHNOLOGY.

IT SHRINKS MATTER USING REFRACTED LIGHT. RAY WILL NOW DEMONSTRATE.

THE LIGHT FROM THE LENS ***SHRINKS*** THE ORANGE.

NOW, IF YOU'LL INDULGE ME.

IT TAKES ABOUT NINETY SECONDS, BUT IN ITS REDUCED FORM THE ORANGE ***DESTABILIZES.***

THE ATOMS WITHIN GENERATE ***PRESSURE...***

AND THE ORANGE CANNOT MAINTAIN ITS INTEGRITY.

TAK

WELL, THAT'S CUTE, BUT HOW DO YOU SUPPOSE WE CAN GET THAT ISLAND UNDER THAT LITTLE LIGHT?

WE CAN'T. BUT IF SOMEONE COULD MOVE AS ***FAST AS LIGHT***--

THEY COULD NAVIGATE THE SURFACE OF THE CENTRE WITH THE DEVICE, EXPOSING ALL OF IT PIECE BY PIECE.

AND THAT, CRAZY AS IT SOUNDS, IS OUR BEST BET.

NOW LET ME GET ***REALLY CRAZY.*** FOR THE LAST FEW WEEKS, I'VE BEEN IN CONTACT WITH AN ALIEN WHOSE TELEPATHIC ABILITIES ARE VERY SENSITIVE.

HE CALLS HIMSELF ***JOHN JONES.*** SOME OF YOU MET HIM YESTERDAY.

BEFORE HE COLLAPSED, HE WAS GETTING VERY STRONG MENTAL WAVES FROM THE CENTRE. THE REASON IT'S APPEARED HERE IS SIMPLE. IT WANTS THE RICH STORE OF EXOTIC FUELS WE USE FOR THE ROCKETS.

IT WANTS THIS FUEL TO AID ITS JOURNEY INTO SPACE.

THE LARGE CREATURE ON THE BEACH WAS A ***SCOUT*** OF SOME KIND THAT THE CENTRE IS ***HOMED*** IN ON.

MAKE NO MISTAKE. THIS THING INTENDS TO ***EXTERMINATE*** US.

IT HAS DECIDED THAT MANKIND POSES A THREAT TO ITS HOME.

SO IT WANTS TO DO A LITTLE HOUSECLEANING BEFORE IT GOES ON HOLIDAY.

ONE WAY OR ANOTHER, THIS IS OUR DEFINING MOMENT. TONIGHT THERE ARE NO DEMOCRATS, NO REPUBLICANS... NO HAWKS, NO DOVES...

...JUST HUMANITY ITSELF AND THE NAKED SIMPLICITY OF AN ABSOLUTE.

GOOD LUCK TO US ALL.

HUMANITY AT STAKE AND ALL THAT, EH?

YOU OKAY THERE, ACE?

SURE, SURE. JUST THOUGHT ***SOMEONE*** WAS GONNA SHOW UP FOR THIS PARTY.

DID SOMEONE ORDER A ***MEAT POPSICLE*** AND SOME ***FLASH EQUIPMENT?***

WINGMAN JORDAN. IT'S ABOUT TIME.

LET'S ***COOK*** THAT SON OF A BITCH, PAPPY.

ADAM

SUFFERIN' SUZIE.

YOU GOT THAT RIGHT, HIGHBALL.

HAL, YOU REALIZE THIS IS.. WELL, ***Y'KNOW...*** IT'S REAL.

NO WORRIES, PAPPY. IT'S KILL OR BE KILLED. ***THAT,*** I UNDERSTAND.

THEN LET'S GET TO IT.

I'M WATCHING AMERICA'S LAST HOPE SOAR OUT OVER THE ATLANTIC, MERE MOMENTS AWAY FROM ENGAGING THE MONSTER.

SUCH ***BRAVERY*** IN THE FACE OF SUCH ***STAGGERING*** ODDS.

JUDAS PRIEST! WHAT THE HELL IS THAT?

NO. OH, NO.

IT'S COMING FROM THE MONSTER ON THE BEACH!

RRRRRRRRREEE

EEEEEEE

DEAR GOD! WHAT A RACKET!

EEE EEEEEE RRRRRR

DANG! THAT NOISE IS-- *OH CHRIST, HERE WE GO!*

FIND COVER! *TO ARMS!!* MOVE! *MOVE!*

JIMMY!

KRENCH!

THIS IS TRAINOR... FOR SOME REASON ACE AND NATE PUT ME IN THE FRONT SEAT SO HERE WE GO.

CONCENTRATE ON SWEEPING FIRE THAT DIVERTS THE CREATURES UP AND AWAY FROM THAT BIG OLD HOLE.

COMING UP ON RANGE... NOW!

WILL YOU LOOK AT THAT?

LOOK AT ALL THOSE CRAZY FISH DOWN THERE. IT'S LIKE THEY'RE CONTAINING THE TURBULENCE FROM THIS THING.

NO MORE CHATTER! WE ARE IN RANGE. FIRE MISSILES AT WILL.

HERE COME THE SUMBITCHES! HOLD FORMATION!

THEY'RE CHASING US! THAT IS WHAT WE WANT, RIGHT?

WHAM

APPARENT--- DAMNATION THAT WAS CLOSE!

THIS IS ARROW ONE! WE ARE SUSTAINING *HEAVY* CASUALTIES!

IF WE'RE TO KEEP OUR EDGE, WE BETTER ACT *FAST.* BLACKHAWKS, DO YOU COPY?

HAWK-AAA!

BARKOOM!

THIS IS **BLACKHAWK ONE.** *I THINK WE HAVE THEIR ATTENTION. CALL IN THE BOMBERS.*

BLAM!

THERE THEY GO!

GIVE 'EM HELL ACE!

ALL RIGHT BOYS, TAKE IT UP OFF THE DECK. NATE STAYS TIGHT BETWEEN US.

ALL WEAPONS SYSTEMS HOT. LIKE THE MAN SAID, IT ISN'T WHEN YOU GO...

...IT'S HOW YOU GO.

IF YOU WORK WITH A GAL LIKE MISS LANE LONG ENOUGH, YOU STOP THINKING ABOUT ALL THE WAYS THERE ARE TO DIE. IT'LL DRIVE YOU CRAZY.

BUT HERE I AM. THIS THING IS GOING TO EAT ME ALIVE, AND ALL I CAN THINK OF IS GETTING FILM INTO THE BACK OF MY 35. I MEAN, IF I CAN AT LEAST CATCH IT ON FILM...

I SWING MY RIG UP AND PULL FOCUS, EXPECTING TO BE STARING DEATH IN THE FACE.

INSTEAD, A MASTERPIECE OF GLORIOUS LIFE FILLS MY VIEWFINDER.

IN THAT SHUTTER'S CLICK, I SEE IT ALL. THE POWER, THE BEAUTY... ***THE WONDER.***

HOLA!

CNAP!

C'MON JUNIOR. GET OUT OF THE WOMAN'S WAY AND LET HER WORK.

I'LL ALWAYS LOVE HER FOR THAT.

ALL OF YOU, FIGHT ON!! TO THE LAST BREATH, FIGHT ON!

THIS IS *WAY* TOO HOT. WE HAVE TO GET YOU SOMEWHERE SAFE.

PLEASE, KING, YOU MUST GET ME AWAY FROM ITS PULL! I FEAR-- I--

!!!AAAARRGH!

I CAN FIGHT IT NO LONGER!

KING! YOU MUST KILL ME! KILL ME BEFORE--

IIIIAAAARRGH!

ANTS! WARM-BLOODED VERMIN.

JESUS, JOHN--

YOU SHOULD HAVE KILLED HIM, KING VERMIN. I HAVE THE ALIEN'S MIND NOW.

JOHN! LISTEN--

GIVE IT TO ME. LET ME TAKE IT FROM YOU.

NOOOO!

I FEEL KING'S CONSCIOUSNESS KNIFE INTO MY MINDSCAPE.

AARGGH!

WITH A WILL I WOULDN'T HAVE THOUGHT POSSIBLE, HE LOCKS ONTO THE CENTRE'S ESSENCE AND DRAWS IT OUT OF ME, LIKE POISON FROM A WOUND.

KAATAATCH

SKAA

KING!

FOR THE FIRST TIME IN WEEKS, I AM CLEAR. I AWAKEN LIKE A CURTAIN HAS BEEN DRAWN AWAY FROM MY MIND. THE CENTRE'S HOLD HAD BEEN GREATER THAN I THOUGHT. BUT SO WAS ***THE COST*** OF MY FREEDOM.

HE'S DEAD, JOHN. ***WE HAVE TO MOVE!***

KING!

MY LAST RATIONAL THOUGHT IS TO SHIFT INTO A "KINDER" SHAPE TO AVOID FRIENDLY FIRE.

DURING MY TIME HERE ON EARTH, I HAVE DONE MY BEST TO REPRESS MY ABILITIES AND LIVE AS MUCH LIKE THE MEN AROUND ME AS POSSIBLE. I FEARED IF MANKIND KNEW OF MY POWER, THEY WOULD SEEK TO DESTROY ME.

BUT THE TIME HAS COME FOR J'ONN J'ONZZ TO JOIN THE FIGHT.

AS I TEAR THE LAST MONSTER IN HALF, I UTTER AN OATH OF REMEMBRANCE.

MY ***FRIEND*** KING FARADAY WILL NOT HAVE DIED IN VAIN.

TODAY ***WE*** WILL TRIUMPH.

THE GLOW INSIDE THE THING IS SOME SORT OF ***ILLUSION.*** THE INSTANT WE ENTER IT, WE SEE SOMETHING FAR MORE DISTURBING. THOUSANDS....MILLIONS OF... CREATURES. FETAL-LOOKING, INTERLOCKING. MY MIND STARTS SPINNING AT THE SICKENING MAGNITUDE OF IT. ***ACE*** SNAPS ME OUT OF IT.

NOW LISTEN TO ME, YOU DEDICATED YOUNG SCIENTISTS...

*...IF I KNOW ANYTHING, IT IS THIS. IN THE FACE OF THE UNKNOWN, **ABANDON REASON** AND **EMBRACE YOUR INSTINCT.***

*NOW LET'S CUT THIS THING A NEW ONE. **CAN I GET AN AMEN?***

AMEN, REVEREND MORGAN. MAY YOU BE HALF AN HOUR IN HEAVEN...

...BEFORE THE DEVIL KNOWS YOU'RE DEAD.

AS OUR MISSILES BITE, A TIDAL WAVE OF PSYCHIC FALLOUT SLAMS ME. THE DYING SCREAMS OF THOSE...THINGS. MAYBE I'M JUST FOOLING MYSELF...

...BUT I SWEAR, THEY ***SOUND*** LIKE SCREAMS OF...GRATITUDE. RELEASE.

WE PIERCE THE LIVING CURTAIN AND AT FIRST I THINK WE MUST'VE SOMEHOW COME OUT THE OTHER SIDE.

TO THIS DAY, I'M NOT CERTAIN WHAT THE OTHER GUYS SAW IN THERE.

BUT I SAW EVERYTHING. THE UNIVERSE. OUR SOLAR SYSTEM STRUNG BEFORE ME LIKE A SET OF PRECIOUS STONES. ALL OF THEM GLORIOUSLY FRAMED BY THE BRILLIANT LIGHT OF THE SUN.

BEYOND THE SUN, THE SECRETS OF THE COSMOS. DIMENSIONAL SHIFTS AND UNTOLD WONDERS CRACKLE IN MY PERIPHERY. I CAN'T TELL IF THIS IS REAL OR NOT, MY FANTASY OR THE CENTRE'S. THEN ACE CONFIRMS THE FACT THAT WE'RE ALL EXPERIENCING SOMETHING...***PERSONAL.***

INSTINCT TELLS ME WE HEAD FOR THE SUN...YOU LIKE IT, PAPPY?

*THE SUN? THERE'S NO SUN. WE HEAD FOR **THE MOUNTAIN.***

THE SUN? THE MOUNTAIN? WHAT ARE YOU GUYS TALKNG ABOUT? I SEE NOTHING BUT DARKNESS AND DE--

UH... GUYS?

ADAM

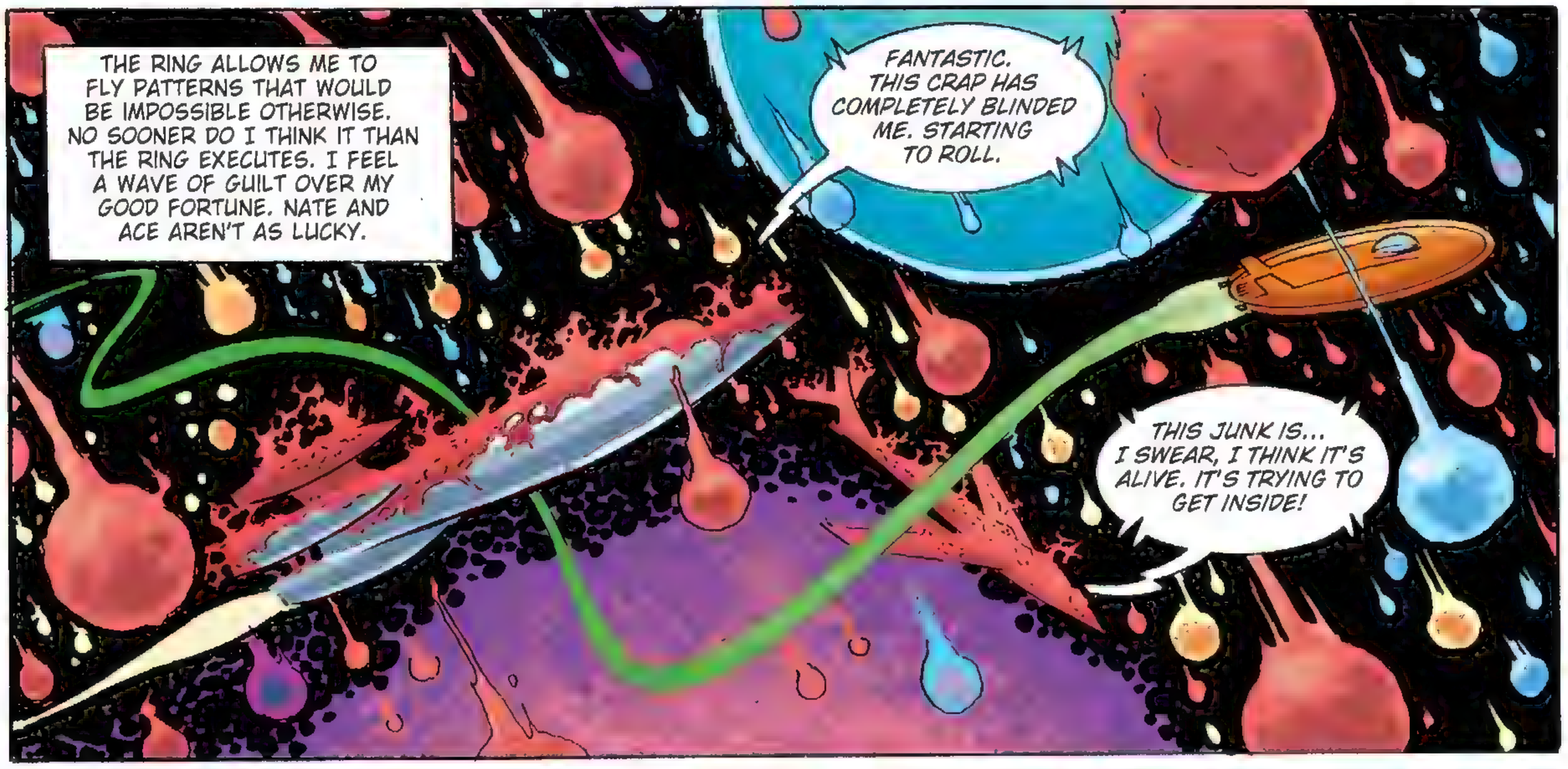
MAINTAIN AN EVEN STRAIN, NATE! ***WHATEVER*** YOU SEE, MY GUT SAYS, ***HEAD FOR THE CENTER.*** HOW YOU DOING, HAL?

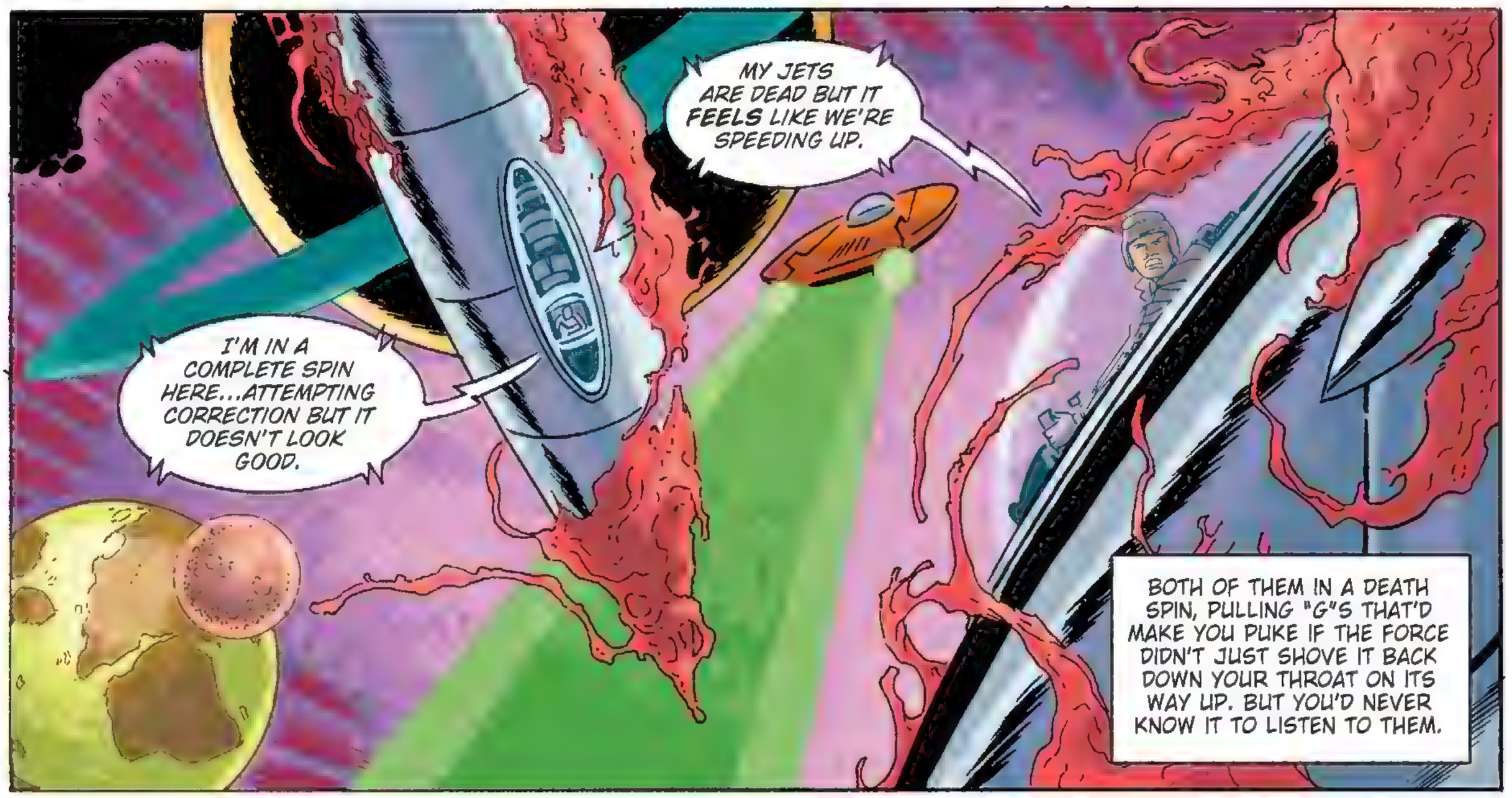
JUST FINE. HEAD FOR THE CENTER. NO PROBLEM.

KLONK!!!

BRAVADO. IF YOU'VE EVER BEEN IN THE CHAIR, YOU KNOW IT CAN BE THE ONLY THING THAT HOLDS YOU TOGETHER WHEN THINGS SPIN OUT OF YOUR CONTROL.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN
THE PURE RUGGED





THIS IS BAD. THERE'S NO WAY WE'RE FLYING OUT OF HERE. I FIGHT BACK SENTIMENTAL TEARS. NOT FOR MYSELF. FOR MY DAD, FOR FLAGG, FOR ACE AND THE STRANGER ABIN SUR. EVEN FARADAY.

HIGH

FOR EVERY POOR SON OF A BITCH WHO THOUGHT HE HAD TO BLOODY HIS HANDS TO MAKE THE WORLD A BETTER PLACE. THIS THING IS PRYING MY MIND OPEN, FORCING THE DARK THINGS INTO THE LIGHT.

MY MIND FLASHES TO THE RING FOR A SECOND AND I SWEAR TO MYSELF. DID THE CENTRE "READ" THAT THOUGHT? I GET A FAST ANSWER IN THE FORM OF A ROCKETING COLUMN OF FETID YELLOW CRYSTAL.

AAARRRRGHHH!!

NEXT BUT

TO EXPLAIN

IMPOSSIBLE

HAPPENED WHAT

REAL CAN'T

MY DAD'S JACKET.

BEING PULLED APART. MEMORIES GO FLASHING BY IN RAPID SUCCESSION. PIECES OF ME EXPLODING LIKE PINS OF STATIC ENERGY.

10¢

TO HAL LT.

IT MEANS "STAR VOYAGER."

...WELCOME YOU TO THE YALU RIVER GENTLEMEN'S CLUB...

HIGHBALL

THE MEMORIES SPEED TO A FEVER PITCH, PEELING AWAY LIKE SHINGLES IN A MAELSTROM. IT'S... EATING THEM. IT'S DEVOURING MY MIND.

MY CHUTE? WHERE'S MY CHUTE?

DO YOU WISH TO DECLARE AN EMERGENCY?

PLEASE...

SHUT UP AND KISS ME, HAL.

PARALYZED. CAN'T THINK STRAIGHT. BUT IT'S MY MEMORIES THAT SAVE ME. ***SURVIVAL. CAROL. THE RING.***

THE RING HAS CHOSEN YOU, HAL JORDAN.

TO HELL WITH WAITING FOR SOME UNSEEN WORD FROM THE BATTERY. I SUMMON EVERY SCRAP OF FOCUS I HAVE LEFT AND SEND MY PLEA TO THE RING. AN INSTANT LATER I'M FREE, MY HEAD CLEAR AND SHARP.

THE RING IS SCREENING THE CENTRE'S PULL SOMEHOW.

TSSSSSSSSS

THAT DIDN'T SOUND GOOD. HIGHBALL? NATE? LET ME HEAR YOU.

KOOOM!

ROGER THAT, ACE. I'M DISABLED BUT INTACT. I THINK HIGHBALL PUNCHED HIS TICKET, THOUGH.

HAL, COME IN. **COME IN!** ALL RIGHT **NATE** THAT'S IT. OPEN BOMB BAYS AND LETS LIGHT UP THIS SON OF A BITCH.

UNABLE TO OPEN BOMB BAYS. SUGGEST YOU FLY CLEAR AND LET ME HANDLE THIS SOLO.

DO YOU WISH TO DECLARE AN EMERGENCY?

NEGATIVE. JUST A LITTLE SNAFU HERE. SHOULD HAVE IT SORTED OUT IN A SECOND.

THE RING IS NOT ONLY PROTECTING ME, IT'S SHOWING ME THAT THE SUN AND SOLAR SYSTEM WERE ILLUSIONS. WE'RE RUSHING HEADLONG INTO THE THING'S BRAIN, OR WHATEVER IT HAS IN PLACE OF A BRAIN.

MY FRIENDS ARE GOING TO DIE ANY SECOND. I CAN FEEL IT.

I DECIDE THE ONLY WAY TO SAVE THEM AND COMPLETE THE MISSION IS TO PULL THEM OUT OF THEIR FLYING COFFINS AND GET THEM INTO THE RING'S PROTECTIVE BUBBLE.

I'M CLOSE ENOUGH TO HEAR THE SPLINTER OF COCKPIT GLASS AND BUCKLING METAL OVER THE CENTRE'S BOTTOMLESS ROAR.

ALL RIGHT, NATE, I FIGURE NOW'S AS GOOD A TIME AS ANY. WHAT SAY WE FINISH THIS MISSION.

ROGER THAT, ACE.

GONNA HAVE TO USE THE MANUAL DETONATOR HERE. I'LL SEE YOU AROUND, ACE.

ROGER THAT, CAPTAIN ADAM.

THE RING CUTS THROUGH THE HULL OF NATE'S SHIP AS HIS HAND FINDS THE DETONATOR. IN THE RESULTANT FLASH, HIS BODY ACTUALLY SEEMS TO VANISH IN A FLOOD OF ATOMIC LIGHT.

WHEN IT CAME DOWN TO IT, CAPTAIN NATHANIEL ADAM PAID THE FULL PRICE OF A HERO'S DEATH. AND HE PAID IT LIKE A MAN.

NATE IS GONE. THERE'S NO CHANGING THAT. I'VE A FRACTION OF A SECOND TO MAKE IT TO ACE.

I'M ACTUALLY RACING THE SPREAD OF AN ATOMIC EXPLOSION. THE CENTRE'S MIND IS SCREAMING NOW...IT KNOWS WHAT'S COMING.

I'M MOVING SO FAST, IT'S LIKE EVERYTHING ELSE IS CRAWLING. I SEE THE HEAT FROM THE BOMB IGNITE THE SURFACES OF ACE'S PLANE. HIS HAIR IS BEGINNING TO SMOKE AS I RIP HIM CLEAR.

WE DID IT. EVEN WITH THE RING'S PROTECTION, THE CENTRE'S FURIOUS SHRIEK FILLS OUR MINDS. I HEAD FOR DAYLIGHT AND PRAY THAT THEY'RE READY AT THE CAPE. IT'S DOWN TO THE FLASH NOW.

...TELLING YOU, ROCKY, IT WAS WEIRD. THE BOAT CAPSIZED AND WE WERE GONERS.

THE NEXT THING I KNOW, I COME TO AND A SCHOOL OF DOLPHINS IS TOWING US INTO SHORE!

YOU'RE ALL SET, FLASH. THE SWITCH IN YOUR GLOVE CONTROLS THE LIGHT. BE SURE TO SWITCH IT OFF THE INSTANT YOU'RE DONE.

COVER YOUR EARS.

WHAT?

IT'S HARD TO BELIEVE THAT A COUPLE HOURS AGO I WAS COMPLAINING ABOUT HOW SMALL EVERYTHING SEEMED.

I USE THE WATER TO MY ADVANTAGE, KICKING UP A WALL OF OCEAN IN FRONT OF ME TO RAMP UP ONTO THE CENTRE.

THE ATOMIC PAYLOAD IS STILL ERUPTING, THE GRISLY TABLEAU FROZEN IN FRONT OF ME.

HELL ON EARTH. THAT'S THE ONLY WAY TO DESCRIBE IT. I CAN FEEL ITS MENTAL PULL SPREADING OVER ME AND FOR A MICROSECOND, I FEEL THE SHARP TASTE OF DESPAIR. I SHUT OFF MY MIND AND TURN ON PALMER'S DEVICE.

IT'S DOWN TO DOING WHAT I DO BEST--

RUN.

THERE HE GOES!

DON'T BLINK OR YOU'LL MISS IT!

EVERY STRIDE I TAKE BRINGS MORE CONFUSION. IT PULLS AT MY MIND, AS SURELY AS THE DEMONS ON ITS SURFACE PULL AT MY FEET.

CONFUSION. APATHY. SELF-DOUBT. THE FUTILITY OF EXISTENCE. IN LESS THAN A SECOND, IT HAS RUN ME THROUGH A GAMUT OF NIGHTMARES HIDDEN IN MY OWN MIND.

CAN'T CONCENTRATE.

SO *ALONE.*

I'M LOSING IT.

THEN, ABOVE ME, I CATCH A GLIMPSE OF SOMETHING MAGNIFICENT. I'M NOT ALONE AT ALL. THEY'RE PROTECTING ME. THEY'RE COUNTING ON ***ME.*** THE ***WORLD*** IS COUNTING ON ME.

IRIS IS COUNTING ON ME. THAT DOES IT, AS ALWAYS.

HER FAITH BRINGS ME NEW SPEED, AND HER LOVE IS THE TOTEM I HOLD IN FRONT OF THIS MENTAL HORRORSHOW.

I DID IT. I LET MY FINAL ARC CARRY ME OUT OVER THE WATER. LIVE OR DIE, I DON'T CARE. I DID IT.

THE LAST THING I SEE IS AN ANGEL OF MERCY.

IT WORKED! THE CENTRE IS SHRINKING!

WE'RE NOT OUT OF THE WOODS YET.

IT'S LISTING BADLY... BUT I THINK ITS CURRENT TRAJECTORY COULD GET IT ASHORE BEFORE IT EXPLODES.

THE EXPLOSION IS ANOTHER QUESTION MARK. WE MIGHT WANT TO GET PEOPLE TO THE BLOCKHOUSES.

GOD KNOWS THE DAMAGE IT WILL DO WHEN IT BLOWS.

UH, HAL?

YEAH, PAPPY?

SO YOU'RE TELLING *ME THAT YOU'VE HAD THIS* MAGIC RING ALL ALONG?

IT ISN'T MAGIC, IT'S ***ALIEN TECHNOLOGY.*** HONESTLY, PAPPY, I THOUGHT MAYBE I WAS JUST CRAZY, Y'KNOW? I WAS AFRAID TO TELL ANYONE.

ANYWAY, THE RING DOESN'T WORK ON ANYTHING YELLOW, AND THAT WAS ONE BIG ***MESS OF YELLOW.***

WELL IT SURE AIN'T YELLOW ANYMORE.

ROGER THAT. LET'S SEE WHAT THIS RING CAN DO.

A MASK?

I'M *SHY*. SAY HI TO THE SEA RESCUE BOYS FOR ME.

SEA RESCUE BOYS?

HEY!!

ALL RIGHT, OLSEN, WE'D BETTER GET EVERYONE--*WHAT THE HECK?*

THERE! A FLYING MAN BATHED IN GREEN LIGHT.

THIS ISN'T GOOD. I'VE CONTAINED IT, BUT EVEN AT ITS REDUCED SIZE, IT'S ENORMOUS. THE RING DOESN'T SEEM TO HAVE THE POWER TO MOVE SOMETHING THIS LARGE.

PLEASE, DON'T LET ME DROP ANOTHER MOUNTAIN. I'M NOT SURE WHO I'M ASKING, BUT I KNOW THERE'S SOMEONE OUT THERE. SOMEONE WHO CAN HELP.

IT HAPPENS IN THE SPACE BETWEEN SECONDS. THEY'RE ***HERE.*** THEY'RE HERE ***WITH ME.*** I UNDERSTAND IT ALL IN AN INSTANT, MORE LIKE A RECOVERED MEMORY THAN NEW INFORMATION.

THEY ARE ***THE GUARDIANS.*** THEY HOLD THE POWER OF THE BATTERY. AND THEY GIVE ME ***THE KEY*** TO THAT POWER.

"YOU, HAL JORDAN. YOU ARE THE KEY. YOUR WILL DRIVES THE RING. CLEAR YOUR MIND AND FOCUS ON WHAT MATTERS."

MY SPIRIT FLOODS WITH AN AWARENESS AND HOPE THAT SNAPS EVERYTHING INTO SHARP FOCUS. DON'T TRY TO MUSCLE THIS THING. ***CONTAIN IT.***

TRUE TO PALMER'S WORD, THE CENTRE DOES NOT HOLD.

I POUR MY HEART INTO THE RING AND IT WORKS. WE CONTAIN THE EXPLOSION, LETTING IT EXHAUST ITSELF WITHIN A PERFECT EMERALD SPHERE. WE ***WILL*** IT TO HAPPEN.

THE REST IS A BREEZE.

BECAUSE I'M ***NOT JUST*** HAL JORDAN ANYMORE. I'M AN INTERGALACTIC COP. A ***GREEN LANTERN.***

THIS SON OF A BITCH WANTED TO SEE THE STARS--

SO I SEND HIM ON HIS WAY.

WITH THE CENTRE DEFEATED, THE WORLD'S COLLECTIVE PSYCHE RELAXES. EVERYWHERE, CROWDS OF PEOPLE ARE CELEBRATING THE RICH TASTE OF LIFE SNATCHED FROM CERTAIN DEATH.

I'M NO PARTY POOPER, BUT I DECIDE TO ENJOY OUR VICTORY ON MY OWN, WITH MY INAUGURAL TOUR OF SPACE SECTOR 2814.

SUFFERIN' SUZIE, I LOVE THIS RING.

...AND JUST DISAPPEARED. IT'S FUNNY, BUT I THOUGHT IT MAY HAVE BEEN MY OLD COMRADE, ALAN SCOTT.

...IT SEEMED LIKE THE GREEN STUFF WAS COMING FROM HIS HAND. INCREDIBLE.

NAH, ALAN'S BLOND.

HEY ACE, WHAT HAPPENED TO YOUR BUDDY, HAL?

COULDN'T TELL YA, BUT IF I KNOW HIGHBALL JORDAN, HE'S OUT THERE SOME-WHERE TEAR-ASSING AROUND.

DO YOU GUYS HEAR THAT?

FOOOSH

CHANK CHANK CHANK

DEAR GOD!

Y'KNOW, EVERY TIME I OPEN A BEER, SOME JERK SHOWS UP TO RAIN ON MY PARADE.

I AM *KING ARTHUR* OF ATLANTIS.

I COME IN PEACE.

THIS ONE HAS BEEN ASKING FOR A WOMAN NAMED LOIS.

IT'S THE KIND OF MOMENT YOU DREAM ABOUT.

A MOMENT SO PERFECT, IT MAKES YOU WANT TO CRY.

KLICK!

BECAUSE YOU KNOW THAT WHATEVER COMES OUR WAY...

SUNDAY SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT

HEROES!

Exclusive coverage of America's finest hour BY LOIS LANE

PHOTOGRAPHY BY JAMES OLSEN

EPILOGUE

THE NEW FRONTIER

I think the American people expect more from us than cries of indignation and attack. The times are too grave, the challenge too urgent, and the stakes too high-- to permit the customary passions of political debate.

We are not here to curse the darkness, but to light the candle that can guide us through that darkness to a safe and sane future.

Today our concern must be with that future. For the world is changing. The old era is ending. The old ways will not do.

Abroad, the balance of power is shifting. There are new and more terrible weapons-- new and uncertain nations-- new pressures of population and deprivation. One-third of the world, it has been said, may be free-- but one-third is the victim of cruel repression-- and the other one-third is rocked by the pangs of poverty, hunger and envy. More energy is released by the awakening of these new nations than by the fission of the atom itself.

The world has been close to war before-- but now man, who has survived all previous threats to his existence, has taken into his mortal hands the power to exterminate the entire species some seven times over.

An urban population explosion has overcrowded our schools, cluttered up our suburbs, and increased the squalor of our slums.

A peaceful revolution for human rights-- demanding an end to racial discrimination in all parts of our community life-- has strained at the leashes imposed by timid executive leadership.

JOHN WILSON
AKA
JOHN HENRY
HERE LIES
A STEEL DRIVIN' MAN

IRONS
7

There has also been a change-- a slippage-- in our intellectual and moral strength. Seven lean years of drouth and famine have withered a field of ideas. Blight has descended on our regulatory agencies-- and a dry rot, beginning in Washington, is seeping into every corner of America-- in the payola mentality, the expense account way of life, the confusion between what is legal and what is right.

Too many Americans have lost their way, their will and their sense of historic purpose.

I stand tonight facing west on what was once the last frontier. From the lands that stretch three thousand miles behind me, the pioneers of old gave up their safety, their comfort and sometimes their lives to build a new world here in the West. They were not the captives of their own doubts, the prisoners of their own price tags.

Their motto was not "every man for himself"-- but "all for the common cause." They were determined to make that new world strong and free, to overcome its hazards and its hardships, to conquer the enemies that threatened from without and within.

WHITE ONLY

Today some would say that those struggles are all over-- that all the horizons have been explored-- that all the battles have been won-- that there is no longer an American frontier.

The problems are not all solved and the battles are not all won-- and we stand today on the edge of a New Frontier-- the frontier of the 1960's-- a frontier of unknown opportunities and perils-- a frontier of unfulfilled hopes and threats.

The New Frontier of which I speak is not a set of promises-- it is a set of challenges. It sums up not what I intend to offer the American people, but what I intend to ask of them. It appeals to their pride, not to their pocketbook-- it holds out the promise of more sacrifice instead of more security.

MERCURY

MY HERO

by RICK FLAGG JR.

My hero is my Dad. His name is also Rick, like me. He was a pilot in the big WAR and he shot down m planes. My Dad is m ce he died

But I tell you the New Frontier is here, whether we seek it or not. Beyond that frontier are the uncharted areas of science and space, unsolved problems of peace and war, unconquered pockets of ignorance and prejudice, unanswered questions of poverty and surplus.

I am asking each of you to be pioneers on that New Frontier. My call is to the young in heart, regardless of age-- to all who respond to the Scriptural call: "be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed."

For courage-- not complacency-- is our need today-- leadership-- not salesmanship. And the only valid test of leadership is the ability to lead, and lead vigorously.

Can a nation organized and governed such as ours endure? That is the real question. Have we the nerve and the will? Can we carry through in an age where we will witness not only new breakthroughs in weapons of destruction-- but also a race for mastery of the sky and the rain, the ocean and the tides, the far side of space and the inside of men's minds?

Are we up to the task-- are we equal to the challenge? Or must we sacrifice our future in order to enjoy the present?

That is the question of the New Frontier. That is the choice our nation must make-- between the public interest and private comfort-- between national greatness and national decline-- between the fresh air of progress and the stale, dank atmosphere of "normalcy"-- between determined dedication and creeping mediocrity.

All mankind waits upon our decision. A whole world looks to see what we will do. We cannot fail their trust, we cannot fail to try.

-John F. Kennedy

CAN YOU SEE ANYTHING, JIMMY?

NOTHING MISS LANE. IF IT'S HERE, IT SURE IS HIDING WELL.

THIS HAS GOT TO BE THE SPOT. IF-- *WAIT!*

THERE IT IS!

DEAR GOD! WHERE ARE THEY?

MISS LANE!

HERE THEY COME NOW...

...ITS GOING TO BE OKAY!

Cover Gallery

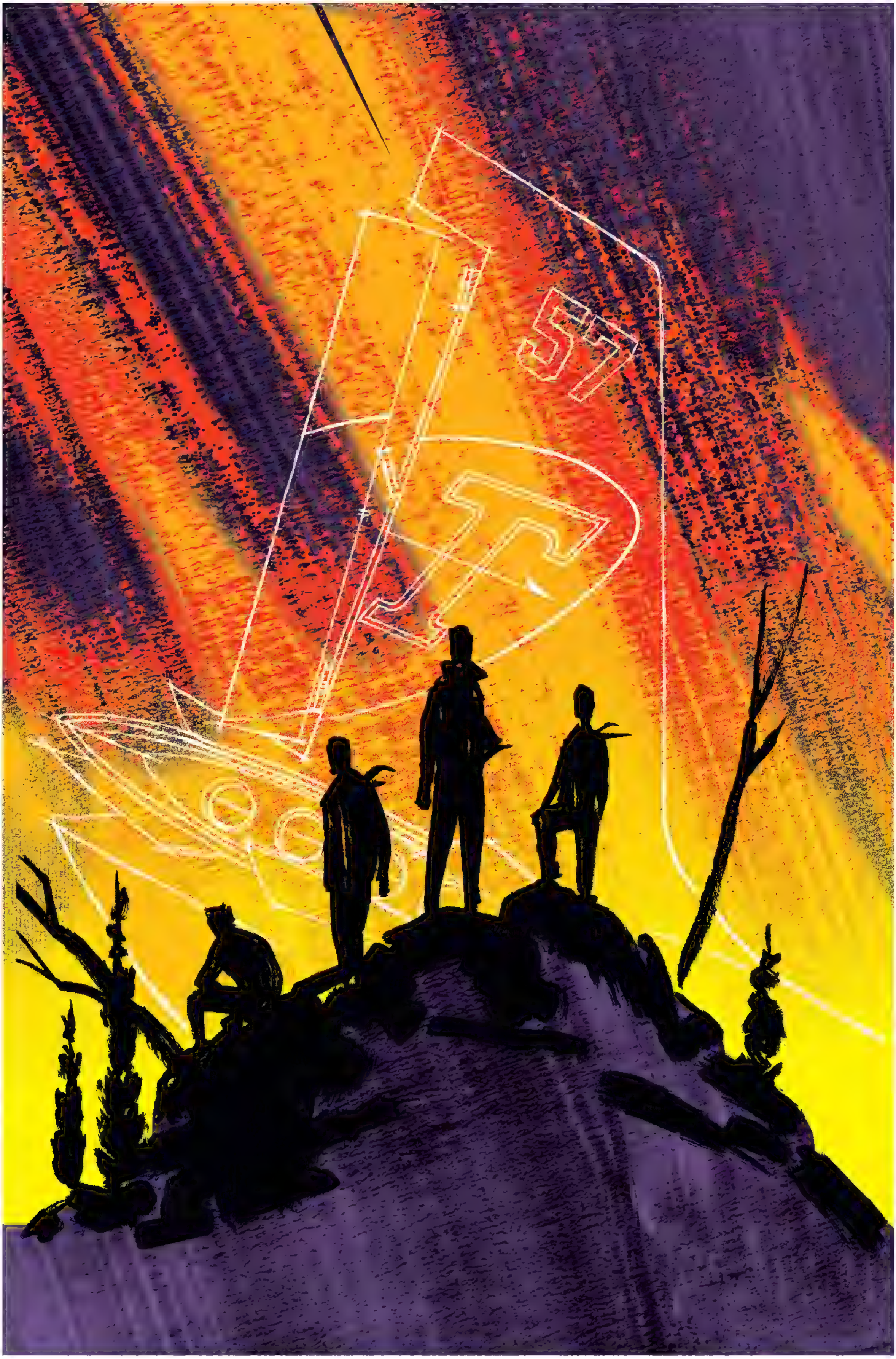
Above: Front cover to DC: THE NEW FRONTIER №1.

Left: Back cover to DC: THE NEW FRONTIER №1.

Above: Front cover to DC: THE NEW FRONTIER №2.

Left: Back cover to DC: THE NEW FRONTIER №2.

TV TODAY
KOOKIEZ
Dampf '02



Above: Front cover to DC: THE NEW FRONTIER №3.

Left: Back cover to DC: THE NEW FRONTIER №3.

Above: Front cover to DC: THE NEW FRONTIER №4.

Left: Back cover to DC: THE NEW FRONTIER №4.

Above: Front cover to DC: THE NEW FRONTIER №5.

Left: Back cover to DC: THE NEW FRONTIER №5.

MOM
NASA
PRESS
LANG, LOIS

Above: Front cover to DC: THE NEW FRONTIER №6.

Left: Back cover to DC: THE NEW FRONTIER №6.

Both of these images were used heavily in the promotion of this series.

Annotations

Alex Toth

A LOOSELY COMPILED AND IRREVERENT LOOK AT THE MAKING OF NEW FRONTIER AND THE CREATIVE FORCES THAT SHAPED IT. FOR THE MOST PART, I'VE ILLUSTRATED THIS SECTION WITH THE WORK OF THE COMICS MASTERS WHO CREATED THIS UNIVERSE IN ORDER TO SHOW THE CONNECTION OR IMPETUS BETWEEN THE TWO. THIS IS NOT MEANT TO BE TAKEN AS A SCHOLARLY OR PRECISE ENDEAVOR; IT IS A PERSONAL RECOLLECTION OF THE CHARACTERS, ARTISTS AND EVENTS THAT INSPIRED THE STORY.

Chapter One
ANALOG HEROES

I confess it took a certain amount of brass to open a project about the origin of the Justice League with a thirty-page sequence featuring dinosaurs and some of DC's most obscure war characters. As long as I'm in the confessional, I'll cop to the fact that as a kid, I never really dug superheroes. I tended to prefer the war, western and mystery titles. Some of my earliest comic book memories revolve around a two-week summer vacation where the only comics were an ancient **MAD** magazine and a coverless comic book. The comic was a war book, but with a bizarre twist. Under the bold, ballsy title "MISSION X," the splash page showed two haggard GIs in a raft made from giant egg shells. Their blazing Thompson machine guns were firing on…A DINOSAUR!

As any ten-year-old boy will tell you, there is nothing more fascinating or exciting than dinosaurs. Unless it's a squad of marines fighting dinosaurs.

As time passed, I came to uncover dozens of these comics. For seven years, **STAR SPANGLED WAR STORIES** had featured a series called "The War That Time Forgot" about a mysterious island in the Pacific, surrounded by a thick mist. Every two months, GIs, marines, frogmen and pilots would wash up on the shores of this island, only to find themselves fighting for their lives against the wild array of prehistoric horrors that lived there. They are pretty goofy, throwaway stories, but they feature some terrific art by **ROSS ANDRU, RUSS HEATH and BIG DADDY JOE KUBERT.**

When I was trying to create a menace large enough to challenge the entire DC Universe, I knew for certain that I wanted to avoid the alien invasion thing. I recall an afternoon of just riffling through my old DC comics, casting about for inspiration. I came across several **STAR SPANGLED WAR** comics featuring "The War That Time Forgot."

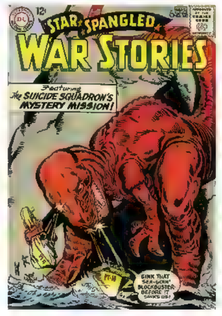
I cracked one for fun, and as I skimmed it, the idea hit me. The island is alive. **THE ISLAND IS THE VILLAIN.** Within half an hour, I had figured out the first chapter of **NF**.

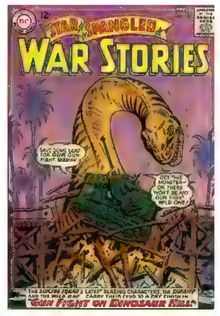
I knew I wanted to pit some of DC's war heroes against the island, but had read interviews where **KANIGHER** and **KUBERT** both maintained that **ROCK AND EASY COMPANY** died during the war. I really wanted to use Easy Company, but deferred based on the creators' comments.

And that's where the brass really kicked in. I decided on **THE LOSERS**, DC's weakest selling and least remembered war series. My foolish plan was to try to tell a story so exciting and powerful, the reader would fall for these characters and hate me when they met their end.

As chapter one testifies, that cottage comic book marked my brain.

Above: The splash that spawned THE NEW FRONTIER. Right: For seven years, Kanigher's "War That Time Forgot" was the lead feature in STAR SPANGLED WAR STORIES. Cover and splash art by Ross Andru and Mike Esposito.





PG 10
PNL TWO: I thought it would be kinda clever to reveal the villain in the first panel.

PG 25
PNL THREE: shows the iconic image of the rifle and helmet as grave marker, an image **JOE KUBERT** used to haunting effect so many times.

PG 30
My research into **NAVAJO CULTURE** led me to the discovery that they consider the number "4" to be fundamental, and many of their beliefs are founded on groupings of four. It was a nice fit with the fact that **JOHNNY CLOUD** was part of a four-man team. As each member is picked off, Johnny's spiritual foundation crumbles.

PG 37
This scene originally had **CLOUD**, on a ledge, encounter a raptor that kills **POOCH** and mortally wounds him. I decided it would add irony to have him undone by the traps of the man he had just saved.

PGs 38-41
The best four pages of American comics I will ever do. Just ask me, I'll tell you. Oh…and it's no mistake that **NF**'s first bona fide hero is a **NATIVE AMERICAN.**

PG 43
PNL ONE: features the aforementioned **SGT. ROCK AND THE MEN OF EASY COMPANY.** They were a childhood favorite, and this was my one shot to draw them into **NEW FRONTIER**. A sharp eye will notice a certain writer/artist tucked into the panel beside Rock's face.
PNL THREE: The end of the **JSA**, at the hands of **SENATOR MCCARTHY**. I wish I could claim this conceit, but I believe it was introduced by **PAUL LEVITZ**, and used to great effect by **JAMES ROBINSON** in **JSA: THE GOLDEN AGE.**

PG 45
This page features the jets that conquered the Mach meter: The **X-1**, **X-1A** AND **X-1B**. Though I doubt they were ever lined up together like this on a runway, that's one of the great things about comics: You can arrange moments for maximum effect.
EDWARDS AIR FORCE BASE was the place to be after World War Two if you were a test pilot. Its incredibly consistent weather and flat desert profile made it the ideal testing ground for supersonic flight. If this era interests you, I highly recommend renting ***The Right Stuff***, the film that brought **TOM WOLFE'S** magnificent book to life.

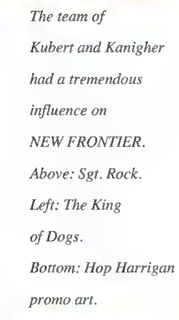
PG 46
"The Fly Inn," or "Pancho's Happy Bottom Riding Saloon" as it was often called, was the bar that pilots favored on Edwards. It was owned by a charismatic woman named **PANCHO BARNES**, who had been a daredevil pilot in the twenties. When a pilot punched his ticket at Edwards, she would place their picture on the wall behind the bar.

PG 47
A daunting task, visualizing the bravest man of the jet age, **CHUCK YEAGER**. Instead of doing a photo reference, I made him a composite of **YEAGER**, **MY DAD** and a young **FRANK FRAZETTA.**

PG 48
PNL ONE: Young **HAROLD JORDAN** is wearing a **HOP HARRIGAN** character watch. Those with a long memory will remember Hop as one of the first pilot heroes of the DCU.

PNL THREE: I remember years ago coming across an American Whiskey bottle with the name "Best Friend." It featured a fine Collie's profile on the label. Hilarious. Whenever I've drawn such a bottle over the years, I've named it "My Buddy" after my own beloved dog. He was also my model for Pooch, in Chapter One. My constant companion for over fifteen years, **BUDDY** passed away just prior to this writing. God bless ya, Buddy boy.

PG 49
Hal has good taste. In panel one, his backpack holds a BLACKHAWK comic and a ***SCIENCE DIGEST***.



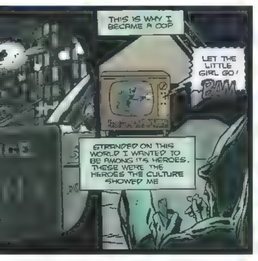
The team of Kubert and Kanigher had a tremendous influence on NEW FRONTIER. Above: Sgt. Rock. Left: The King of Dogs. Bottom: Hop Harrigan promo art.

THE LAWS OF TIME, SPACE, CONTINUITY, AND THE NEW FRONTIER

✪ *1. The timeline is real and covers 1945 to 1960. Silver Age characters appear at the time DC started publishing them, i.e., Barry is hit by lightning in 1956.*
✪ *2. Retcons haven't happened yet.*
✪ *3. No NF retcons could contradict original continuity — they had to complement existing continuity or show a fresh point of view.*
✪ *4. When the story ended, everything had to be as it was when the JLA debuted in Brave and the Bold # 28.*
✪ *5. Snapper Carr does not exist.*

Annotations

Ross Andru



Above: Two strips that had a strong influence on NEW FRONTIER were Robinson and Smith's JSA: THE GOLDEN AGE and Jones and Barreto's AMERICAN SECRETS. Left: Roy Raymond from SOLO #5.

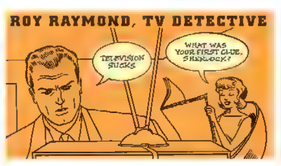
Two of my biggest storytelling influences: Alex Toth (right) and Frank Robbins (above).

Chapter Two
STATE OF THE UNION SUIT

This chapter was meant to lay the groundwork for the type of world the DC heroes were trying to survive in. The scene with **Hourman** is strongly influenced by the opening of **Hitchcock's *Vertigo***.

PG 52
It's nothing new to use **simulated media coverage** to advance a story of this nature. I thought I could at least freshen this device by showing the evolution of the coverage. Issues one and two featured **print media**, and we later see **newsreels** and **television**.

PG 54
Roy Raymond, TV Detective. It's the real name of a real strip. No kiddin'.



PG 56
I got a kick out of doing this image of the **Suicide Squad** in Paris, the **Eiffel Tower** an obvious victim of their zeal. Recently, **Team America: World Police** played with this idea to hilarious effect.

Chapter Three
HEAVY TRAFFIC IN MIG ALLEY

The MIG was a Soviet-built jet and ***the alley*** was a stretch of sky over the **Yalu River** in **Korea**.This chapter plays with the notion that **Ace Morgan** and **Hal Jordan** have a backstory prior to the dawn of the Silver Age. As a character, Ace was intended to be a median or bridge between the **John Wayne analog** of **Flagg** and the more liberal **Jordan**. These three men allowed me to explore the spectrum of character and thinking in the American fighting man, circa 1950.

PG 57
PNL TWO: "Maintain an even strain" was a popular call to an excitable pilot.

PG 58
This entire scene is a loving homage to the unmatched work of **Alex Toth**. His "Sabre Jet" and "Thunder Jet" stories (written by **Harvey Kurtzman**) for EC are the high-water mark in such storytelling. Several years ago, I parted with a small fortune to buy the entire set of Toth originals for a Korean air story called "Sealey's Saucer." More on that later.

PNL THREE: "Sufferin' Suzie!" was a favorite exclamation of **Frank Robbins's** adventuring pilot **Johnny Hazard**. A tip of the hat to one of the true greats of the medium.

PG 65
Here we introduce **Lois Lane** and **Jimmy Olsen**. I remember distinctly wanting to portray Jimmy as a resourceful and courageous kid, as opposed to the clueless hostage-in-waiting he often is.

PG 66
The **H-5 series helicopter**, affectionately known as a "Huey." The glasswork on this machine is a thing of beauty.

PG 71
I became quite taken with the notion of a war that was so freshly over that men in the field remained unaware. To see the life-and-death struggle continue unnecessarily makes it a bit more poignant and pointless at the same time.

PG 72
In my original draft, it was **Jimmy** who bombs the **Korean soldiers**, but DC considered that a bit too resourceful and courageous.

PG 75
Jimmy saves **Hal Jordan** in a hail of bullets! This tableau is based on the climax of the '50s film ***The Bridges at Toko-Ri*** starring **Bill Holden** and **Grace Kelly**.

PG 76
PNL ONE: Take a look at **Jimmy** and **Lois** here. The kid and the eager reporter, ready for the lurid details. Compare them to the two people on the jetway in **Chapter Fifteen**.

PNL THREE: "MAKE WAR NO MORE" was **Kanigher's** immortal sign-off at the end of every DC war book when I was a kid. The perfect end to the chapter.

Chapter Four
GODS AND MONSTERS

This type of story usually has an overarching narrative by a single character that helps hold the story together. The photographer in *Marvels*, the priest in **KINGDOM COME** and **Johnny Quick** in **THE GOLDEN AGE** are some examples that spring to mind.

I decided it might be more interesting (and for some readers, frustrating) to let the story emerge slowly, and to look at our cast's disparate lives in a series of blackout scenes that were provocative stories on their own. It isn't until these stories start to gain momentum and overlap that the narrative intent becomes clear. The biggest plus with this approach was that I could introduce a variety of narrative voices to the story and bring more depth to individual characters by sharing their thoughts.

We move from **John Cloud's** narrative, to **Ace Morgan's** report, to **Hal Jordan's** narrative and now we land on **J'onn J'onzz, the Manhunter from Mars**. Once the reader has adjusted to this approach, we are able to jump from scene to scene without time-consuming transitional connections.

PG 80
More print media. This newspaper article touches on the factual situation in **Indochina** at this time. America was not publicly aiding in the war for what would be called **Vietnam**, but it was secretly training and advising the South Vietnamese. For more on this fascinating period in history, I strongly recommend **Stanley Karnow's** exhaustive **Vietnam: A History**.

PGs 82-87
I thought my take on **Wonder Woman** and **Superman** might raise eyebrows, and I've received more comment from readers on this scene than any other. How can two people of such common virtue be so far apart ideologically? That is part of what I believe made **NEW FRONTIER** an interesting read; forcing these fictional characters to take stands on impossibly complex, real situations. I also thought it was high time we saw a Wonder Woman that was true to her heritage, an **Amazon** with Mediterranean beauty, enormous passion and...**taller than Superman**.

PG 88
For the series, it was taken for granted the reader knew **J'onn's** and **Barry's** origins. In order to make this edition "complete," this page and page 90 were added to fill out their backstory.

PG 89
The notion of **J'onn** mistaking television for an accurate portrayal of life in America really grabbed me.
PNL TWO: J'onn as **Groucho Marx**.
PNL THREE: Another thrill—the chance to draw **Bugs Bunny** in a story of mine.

PG 90
PNL ONE: This type of **Native American** image was often used on the **test patterns** that ancient TV stations would air when they shut down for the night.

PG 93
This scene with **J'onn** is narrated by my favorite DC character, **Slam Bradley**. Slam is talking to **Jimmy, the bartender** at **Jimmy's 24-7**. This has become my **Gotham**

watering hole of choice, and is also featured in my issue of **SOLO**. The off-camera Jimmy is actually my good friend **Jimmy Palmiotti**. When I write characters talking in the bar, it's easy to imagine them talking to the affable Mr. P.

PG 101
I knew that I was going to transition **Batman** during the story, from grim vigilante to the somewhat lighter

Silver Age model. This scene with the child offers some explanation for his decision to tone it down a bit.

PG 103
Viva ***Las Vegas***! This sequence was a dream to draw.

PG 106
Anyone who knows their **Madras plaid** knows that our sportscaster is **Jack Ryder**, the man who would later become **Steve Ditko's Creeper**.

PG 109
PNL ONE: **Dinah Lance, Selina Kyle, Alan Scott** and **Charles McNider**.

PG 112
The prizefight in this scene is between **Ted "Wildcat" Grant** and **"Clay," Muhammad Ali's** name before his Muslim conversion. Some have been upset with my notion that Grant could KO the "Greatest." I meant no disrespect to Ali (another childhood hero); I was simply paying respect to Ted Grant.

PG 117
PNL ONE: **The Dumont Network** was an early television network that went bust. The Western program is based on DC's popular '50s cowboy **Johnny Thunder**. Thunder featured brilliant work by **Alex Toth** and **Gil Kane**.

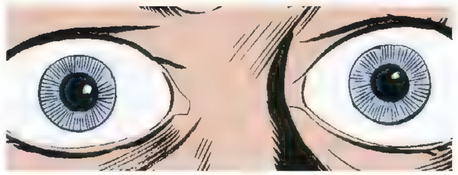
PG 119
One of **NEW FRONTIER's** biggest secrets... **Captain Cold** is actually...**Grant Morrison**!

Left: Slam Bradley hangs out at Jimmy's, from SOLO #5. Above: Infantino's Captain Cold. Top: In her earliest incarnation, Wonder Woman took no prisoners. Art by Harry G. Peter.

Annotations

Chapter Five continued

Pgs 122-123
The genius of **Dave Stewart**. I think Dave really helped to make our version of **the Flash** visually unique.
PNL TWO: The **Kirby** eyes!



PG 129
PNL TWO: The "Jay" Ted is referring to is **Jay Garrick, the original Flash.**

PG 131
PNL NINE: I enjoyed the notion that **Barry Allen** hadn't perfected certain parts of his repertoire. Instead of vibrating through the window, he screws up his frequency and blows the window out.

Any effort to insinuate the DCU into the real world of the 1950s wouldn't have been complete without looking at the civil rights issues of the day. The problem was DC catered to white culture, and there were very few black characters to explore this theme.

I finally settled on Steel, and John Henry Irons. Continuity tells us Steel didn't come along 'til much later, but I thought that perhaps I could retro-fit a backstory that shows a simpler man in a simpler time donning the mantle of John Henry to fight racism.

When it came to design, the hammers were a given. After a couple of dreadful attempts at a costume, it occurred to me that the answer was staring me in the face.

John Henry's enemies wear white hoods – he would wear a black hood. The hood is cinched by the noose they used to try to kill him, and its design borrows heavily from the Kubert villain "The Hooded Hangman," from the pages of ***ENEMY ACE****.*

John's narrative is a mixture of three versions of the old folk song, with several new verses by myself to describe the story action.

PG 135
Snow falling on **Las Vegas**. This is the kind of wonder that the genre offers past the fistfights and such.

PG 136
The **Corvette**. This American classic was the number one choice of pilots and astronauts.

PG 137
PNL ONE: **Nellis Air Force Base** is a restricted area outside **Las Vegas**. Little is known about this place, but it is mentioned in the same breath as **Area 51** and other top-secret facilities. The fateful trip **Ace** is about to make is in this drop-dead gorgeous **B-47**.
PNL TWO: Uncle Milty is **Milton Berle**, the famed television comedian.

PG 139
PNL ONE: As far-fetched as **Hal**'s narrative may sound here, it is based on an incident described in **Tom Wolfe**'s **The Right Stuff**.

PG 141
PNL TWO: **Ace Morgan** stakes the median position. **Hal** is remorseful about killing. **Ace** is philosophical. On the other end, **Flagg** seems to relish it.

PG 143
"Do you wish to declare an emergency?" This was a protocol question the tower would ask if a pilot was in trouble. Several recordings from the time have the tower asking a test pilot this question as he heads, nose down at speed, toward the concrete 400 feet below him. They inevitably say something mundane like "I think if I can just get the rear fl—" and then the recording is taken over by **the deafening sound of the crash.**

PG 145
I picked **Red Ryan** as the voice of the **Challengers** because he's one of the few DC characters I could tweak to "cool." Most of these cats in the DCU were pretty buttoned down. I gave Red the rhyming narrative to reflect the beat movement and to make it easier for the reader to pick up on who is narrating what. Our cast was growing, and I was trying to develop devices to keep narrative voices distinct.

Chapter Six
THE MEN WHO FELL TO EARTH

PG 149
PNL TWO: **Red** is riding a World War Two-era **Harley Davidson**.

PG 150
PNL ONE: This restaurant is like a sense memory of a place in **Malibu** called **the Chart House**. What a view. This entire dinner scene is also a great example of **Dave Stewart**'s romantic side. Absolutely brilliant.

PG 153
PNL ONE: The **billboard** is based on a real one from the era. Drink when you shoot! Hilarious.

PGs 154-156
Early Silver Age comics were aimed squarely at kids like me. Back then, the character's origin and motivation were dealt with in a handful of panels, and then they got on with the adventuring. **Challengers of the Unknown** was no exception. Four total strangers crash a plane and within two minutes of having survived, they strike a pact to become adventurers together and challenge the unknown with what's left of their borrowed time. Ahem. I added the notion of nightmares about the crash drawing them all back to the site on the same night. A coincidence? Fate? Adding a little bit of time and having them experience a collective response to the crash at least gives them a reason to get better acquainted. I'm not sure, but I think it is around the fifth beer that they come up with the idea to form a group.

PG 157
John Henry: If there's a section of **NEW FRONTIER** that took the most time to bring together, it was the story of John Henry. **See sidebar.**

PG 159
At this point in the story I began to loosen up with realistic details. The use of more fanciful transport and gadgets let DC's imaginary history evidence itself through technology.

PGs 166-171
This scene didn't appear in the original story for a couple of reasons. First off, I was running long and had to cut pages. Secondly, I didn't really want to give away the "Island as living thing" notion just yet. I regretted pulling it, because we get to see **Flagg**'s soft spot for **Cloud**, **Cloud**'s final words, and **Jess Bright** is driven mad by the Island's psychic force. This helps motivate his crack-up on the rocket later, which kinda comes out of the blue in the original. The **hover vehicles** they use are modifications of the beauties that **Race Bannon** and **Dr. Quest** had in **Doug Wildey**'s **Jonny Quest**.

PG 173
PNL TWO: **Mr. Jordan's shirt** by **Chiarello of Beverly Hills**.

PG 177
Flagg calls **Hal** "Timex," referring to the indomitable timepiece. A popular commercial campaign during the time featured **John Cameron Swayze** torture-testing the watch in all manner of bizarre ways. "It takes a licking and keeps on ticking!" was the two-fisted slogan.

PG 179
PNL ONE: The serviceman on the bunk is reading the '50s blockbuster bestseller **I, The Jury** by **Mickey Spillane**.

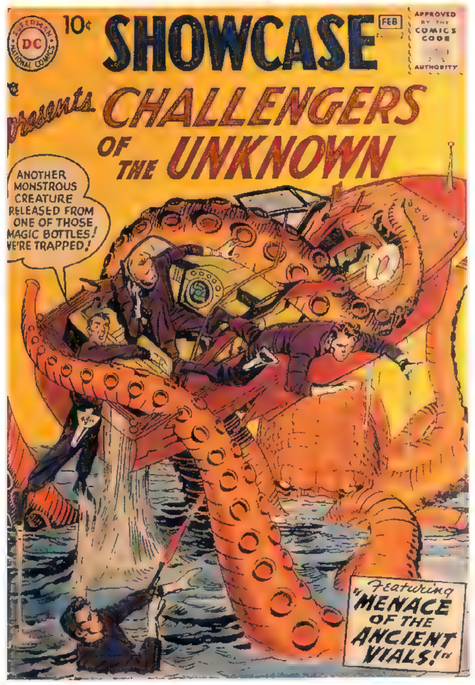
Chapter Seven
PARANORMAL PARANOIA

PG 185
The sharp-eyed out there will notice in panel three that the crowd in the theatre was put together by my longtime friend and collaborator **J. Bone**. When it got hairy keeping deadlines, J. stepped in to help.

J. Bone and the author.

PG 186
PNL ONE: I couldn't help but lead off John's night at the cinema with a **Fleischer Brothers** *Superman* cartoon in the front of the featured film.

PNL TWO: **The Movietone Newsreel** was a weekly staple in movie theaters nationwide and the perfect media vehicle to introduce **the Challengers of the Unknown** to the public.
PNL THREE: **Ace's pose** in this shot is referenced off the **1968 GI Joe Action Pilot photo box** for their **fighter pilot uniform.**



Left: Fifty years old and still exciting: Kirby's Challengers. Below: Early J'onn J'onzz, by Joe Certa.

PGs 188-189
This spread is a widescreen take on one of my favorite **Kirby** covers for the **Challengers** from **SHOWCASE**. Also note the bitchin' **Chris-Craft powerboat**. Although this scene is meant to reflect **John Jones**'s feelings about humanity and set the scene for the **Challengers**, it also adds another small piece to the growing mystery. Obtuse as it is, the notion here is this **Octo-thingy** is a part of the **Centre** and this is their first encounter with a piece of our star menace.

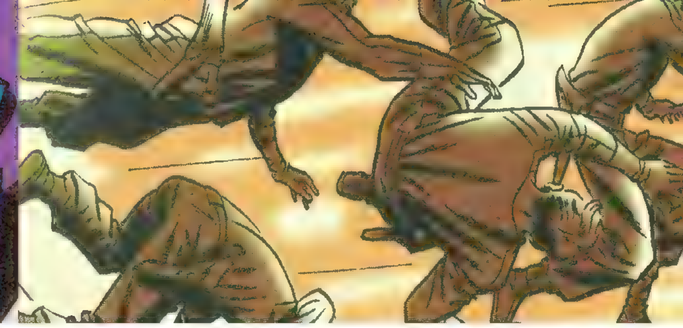
PGs 190-191
The Martian Manhunter surprised me and turned out to be one of my favorite characters to write. The idea of an alien watching a '50s film depicting aliens had some obvious humor potential.

PG 192
Batman makes the scene, in all his creepy glory. This encounter is also the first real notion that I may actually be building a story. We see that the night in the **Paris Street church** had wider overtones that are affecting people's minds.

PG 196
PNL THREE: He's not named, but the man at the microphone is vice president **Richard Milhous Nixon**.

PG 197
Am I the only one, or is a lot of the **White House** kinda blah? The room in this scene is one of the most striking and is simply referred to as "the red room." I did my best to match every detail.

Annotations



Chapter Seven continued

PG 203
Enter **King Faraday**. Originally, **King** was nothing more than a plot device, but like **J'onn J'onzz**, he grew on me.

PG 204
This is no doubt the **densest** section of the story. One could easily skip **King's slide show** and still enjoy the book, but I really wanted to use this scene to cohesively graft my plots and subplots to real events.

PNL ONE: **Laika**, the Russian dog, was the first living creature in space.
PNL TWO: Here we see America's basic approach to putting a man in space. Because this was a war of ideologies with Communist Russia, **the best way to go about this wasn't necessarily the right way**. The fast, or "quick and dirty," approach was chosen because, from a propaganda perspective, they had to pace the Russians. **It is widely believed** that the more productive and rewarding approach would have been to stick with the **Air Force's parabolic jet technology**. From a story standpoint this intrigued, because it led to the idea of the Air Force covertly developing something radical while NASA was publicly testing the missile/capsule initiative.

PG 205
PNL ONE: Much comment has been leveled at **New Frontier** because it is said to cast conservatives like **Flagg** and **Faraday** as **right-wing nuts** while more liberal characters like **Jordan** feed into the ascension of **Super Democrat JFK. Note here that it is the Democrat Truman** who appoints **Flagg** and **Faraday** and sets them loose. It's possible they are **Republican**, but unlikely. **Truman** would be drawing from his own party's talent pool.
PNL TWO: The **giant spider** is straight out of the '50s classic *Tarantula*, starring **John Agar** and featuring a young **Clint Eastwood**.

PG 206
PNL ONE: "The Teschner Initiative." I named the scientist after one of my oldest friends, **Mike Teschner**.
Autoclave technology and composite alloys were on the horizon at this time but were decades away from practical application. My conceit is that this German scientist had created a breakthrough well ahead of its time.

PGs 209-211
The scene with **John and the book** was meant to build suspense and offer a few more tidbits about the coming menace. This allowed for a brief section featuring **Kanigher and Kubert's** *Viking Prince*. Because it takes place as illustrations in an ancient book, I opted to do my best **Joe Kubert** here. I fall far short of the master, but I hope it evoked the mood. Kudos to **Dave** for his old-timey wash work here.

PG 213
PNL THREE: Although the story didn't warrant it, I had to get a gorilla into the strip. I know it isn't really **Grodd** (just a booby trap of **Faraday's**), but still **Every comic worth its salt needs a monkey**.

Chapter Eight
GOVERNMENT ISSUES

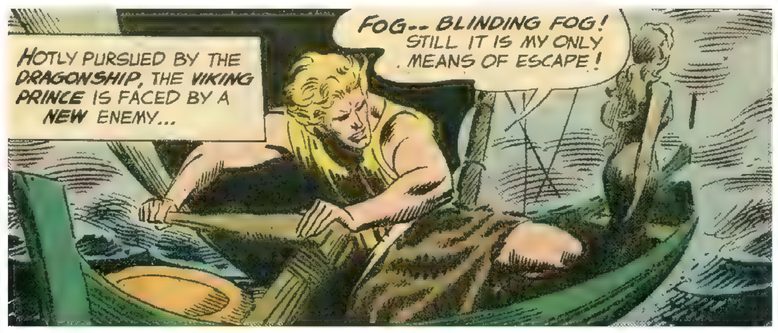
PG 215
PNL ONE: The woman directing the fire is none other than **Mademoiselle Marie**, another of **Kanigher's** forgotten heroes. Note the **Plymouth squad car**.

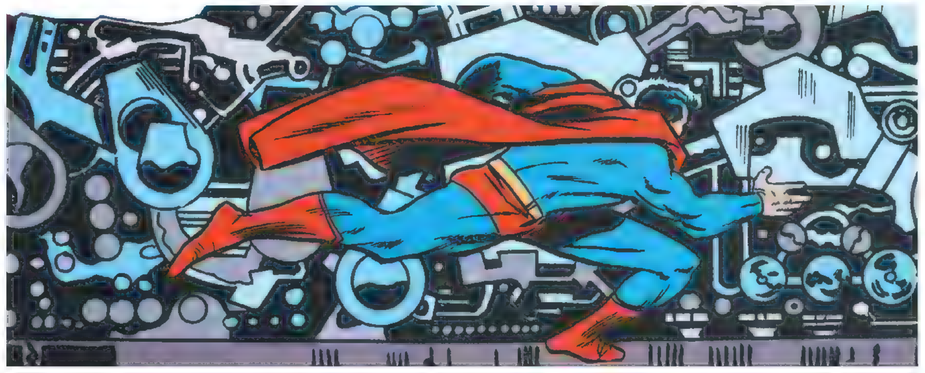
PG 218
The Car Show, or, as it used to be known, **the Motorama**. It would be tiresome to list, but the cars featured in this scene are all actual vehicles from the era. I particularly like the **Buick LeSabre**.

PG 221
PNL ONE: It's impossible to read, but that entire article is something I spent a great deal of time writing. *C'est la vie*.
PNL TWO: One clipping features **Rosa Parks**, national hero.

PG 222
PNL ONE: Harvey is indeed **Harvey Bullock**, Gotham's legendary rogue cop.

PG 225
PNL ONE: According to the wall graffiti behind **Harry**, "the D.A. is a two-faced S.O.B."





PGs 227-228
Another dream scene. The stylized space gear and rocketry of **Wally Wood** always astounded me, and this was my chance to play with that type of setting. The green glass gyroscope/compass they use to navigate is right out of the classic sci-fi film *Forbidden Planet*.

PG 229
The interior design of **Ferris Aircraft** is typical of a forward- thinking corporation at the time. Broad expanses of open space punctuated by logical, low-lined seating and furnishings.

PGs 231-234
The death of John Henry.
PNL THREE: Here is an instance where I've crossed a certain line and used some reprehensible language. **John Henry's** story is short and tragic. I wanted the reader to know that there was no hope for him, and America was still years away from a time when there would be that hope. The young child is a symbol of that hopelessness. She is proof that the coming generation will offer the same conflicts. I wanted to show the most innocent creature I could imagine committing the most heinous act in the story. The death of John Henry is a brutal blow that breaks the **Martian Manhunter's** heart. It is the act that causes him to turn his back on his adopted world and risk death to get back home.

PG 235
Edward R. Murrow was the man who created television news in America. He fearlessly spoke up about injustice, and his scathing condemnation of **Senator Joe McCarthy** is said to have led to Tail Gunner Joe's downfall. **Google** this man.

PGs 243-244
Originally cut for length, these new pages show the fate of **Ted Smiesel**, my **Dr. Seuss** analog.

PG 245
PNL THREE: That is young **Walter Cronkite**, the man who took several million of us to the moon with the **Apollo astronauts**.

PG 249
PNL THREE: This panel, art, color and dialogue, is one of my absolute favorites. Dunno why, but there you go.

PGs 250-251
This type of spread is time-consuming as hell, but fun to construct. Note the **half-eaten Oreos**, a tip of the hat to comics impresario **Keith Giffen**.

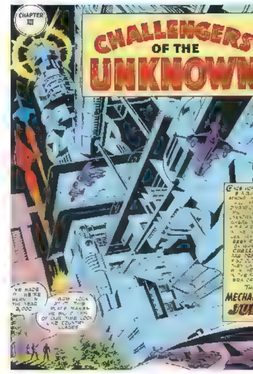
Chapter Nine
THE FLYING CLOUD

The rifle-barrel night launch of the Flying Cloud was another real dream sequence to put together. It can't be overstated that in the design department, I owe much to the aforementioned **Wally Wood** and the master, **Frank Frazetta**.

PG 254
PNL THREE: That is **Doctor Will Magnus**, who will go on to create **the Metal Men**.

PGs 256-257
The Dave Stewart touch. I dropped all the hold lines and used very chunky inks here, further defining the shapes with the side of a pencil. Then Dave magically made it look more dramatic than I could've ever imagined.

PGs 259-260
These pages were cut from the original due to length, and I'm glad to include them here. They set up **Adam Strange's** situation and add depth to **Jess Bright's** motivation for sabotaging the Flying Cloud. Panel One is totally inspired by **John Kricfalusi's** *Ren and Stimpy* classic, "Space Madness."



FRONTIER LIVING
A GLOSSARY OF TERMS FROM THE SILVER AGE

SCUTTLEBUTT: *The poop, the skinny, the latest gossip.*
PINK: *Sympathetic to communists, a liberal or Pinko.*
RHUBARB: *A ruckus, rumpus, commotion or mad noize.*
PIPE DOWN: *Be quiet, stifle it, shut yer pie hole.*
PURE RUGGED: *Tough as nails, or very difficult.*
BANDITS: *Korean fighter jets, specifically MIGs.*
PUDKNOCKER: *They've got a pud, and they're knocking it. Give it a second. You'll get it.*

Annotations

Chapter Nine continued

PG 261
PNL ONE: **Airman Stone** is my buddy and assistant on **NEW FRONTIER**, **Chris Stone**. Note the monitors in the background. This wing of **Faraday**'s menagerie houses **Vandal Savage**, **Captain Cold**, **Al Pratt (the golden age Atom)**, **Hourman and J'onn J'onzz**.

PG 262
This page represents a real moment during the creation of **NEW FRONTIER** where the time spent building it on one level led me to see it on quite another. In a drama such as this, the character's actions tend to define them in the reader's minds as "good" or "bad." When I saw how this was lining up, I took the time to consider the question. The most obvious "bad" guy is **King Faraday**, but it occurred to me that he thought he was doing the right thing. **He believed in what he was doing and that it was for the greater good.** Right or wrong, his intentions were sincere, as were **Wonder Woman's** in Vietnam, and **Hal's** in Korea. This led me to a somewhat more complex but far more compelling frame of reference for my cast. They're all "good guys"; they draw the line in different places, but both types believe in a greater good. **It is this understanding of what's inside Faraday that gives J'onn the will to stick it out.**

PG 266
PNL THREE: That's gotta be **Toyman** in that thing.

PGs 269-273
This entire rescue sequence was the kind of crazy nonsense that I love to dream up. The idea of these maniacs rigging together this idea within an hour or two and then actually doing it defines the **Challengers** as characters. That is to say, they're insane.

PGs 274-275
The death of **Flagg** and **Karin**. Originally, these two were to perish inside **The Centre** at the end of book six, but I had hit a point in the story where I needed a big event to keep the forward physical and emotional motion. Faraday had grown into something important, and I saw that he could carry the side of the story I had planned for **Flagg**. I decided to give **Rick** and **Karin** a very special moment all their own.

PG 277
The notion of **Karin Grace** as a painter comes straight from the original series.

PG 278
I'd avoided **Hal's** first encounter with the **Eskimo mechanic Tom** until I came across this way of addressing his very non-PC nickname.

PG 281
PNL ONE: **Rocky's** mention of a reclusive genius named **Kurtzberg** as the architect of **Challenger Mountain** is a nod to series architect **Jack Kirby's** real name.
PNL TWO: Even the phones rock in **Kirbyville**.

Chapter Ten
S.O.S. GREEN LANTERN

The chapter title is from the first GL story. The majority of **Abin Sur's** narrative is also taken directly from the original. The gospel according to **John Broome**. What I tried to do here is not unlike the **Challengers'** origin. If you were teleported to the desert and given a magic ring by an alien, would you think you were a galactic spaceman or would you seek professional help? Instead of swallowing his destiny whole, **Hal** doubts his own sanity.

PG 284
Hal and **Abin Sur**. I decided to drop the rocket **Abin Sur** crashed. It was one of those things that really bugged me as a kid. Why would a guy with a power ring be trapped in a spaceship? He flies to his death with the ring, as (I think) it should be.

PG 292
PNL TWO: **Hal** encounters the **guardians** for the first time.

PG 295
PNL THREE: At this point, not only is **Hal** wondering if he's cracking up, but the power of the ring confronts him with the magnitude of his responsibility.

Pg 296
PNL THREE: **Haley** is in the middle of *Scientific American*'s cover story on **Ray Palmer**.

Chapter Eleven
TOWARD THE CENTRE

PGs 298-301
The artwork for the storybook segment was another challenge. I was trying to achieve the airy and design-conscious look of '50s illustration, as typified by **Mary Blair**.

PG 303
Superman meets **Robin**. Note the **Dick Sprang Batmobile** in the background.

PG 313
Another moment of artistic license. Why would a guy who lived underwater wear clothes? I was going to design a **naked Aquaman**, but in the end I chickened out and gave him back his pants.

Chapter Twelve
THE WAR THAT TIME FORGOT

PGs 317-318
Wonder Woman crashes the **invisible plane**. This was another real challenge to visualize. I wanted to find a way to actually make her plane invisible, instead of using some sort of outline or ghosted image. Because she's wounded, I realized I could use sloshing blood to define the cockpit, and during the crash the debris around the plane gives it shape.

PGs 321-323
With the storm and the primitive technology available, I knew I wanted to treat this sequence to capture the effect of really crappy video laced with interference. The effect was achieved by rendering the pages on Duo-Shade board and then layering static over the image in Photoshop.

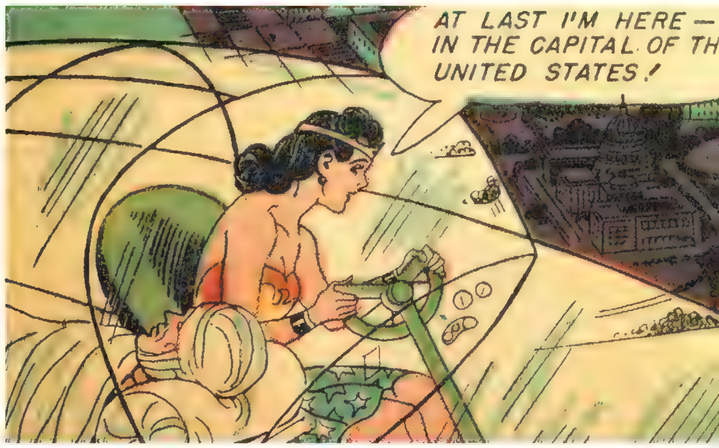
Chapter Thirteen
DANGER IS OUR BUSINESS

PG 325
I always found it tiresome that a duffer like **Barry** could hide his identity from a very sharp and together woman like **Iris**. I mean, she's an investigative reporter, for gosh sakes. Here we see she was just humoring him, letting him think he had a big secret.

PG 326
PNL TWO: **Vandal Savage** has indeed been to the Island. Check out **Tim Truman's** miniseries **GUNS OF THE DRAGON**.

PG 328
PNL THREE: It broke my heart to have to scrap **Blackhawk's** original aircraft, but it is the jet age. Here we see them in more modern aircraft.

PG 330
PNL THREE: Earlier I noted the talent and career of **Alex Toth**, and a story called "Sealey's Saucer." Hal's saucer is very much Toth's design from this old story, given a hot paint job in Chevrolet's "Hugger Orange."



Chapter Fourteen
THE BOY SCOUT'S LAST

PG 337
PNL ONE: **Diana** and **Kal's** relationship comes full circle. The warrior passes the fight to the statesman.

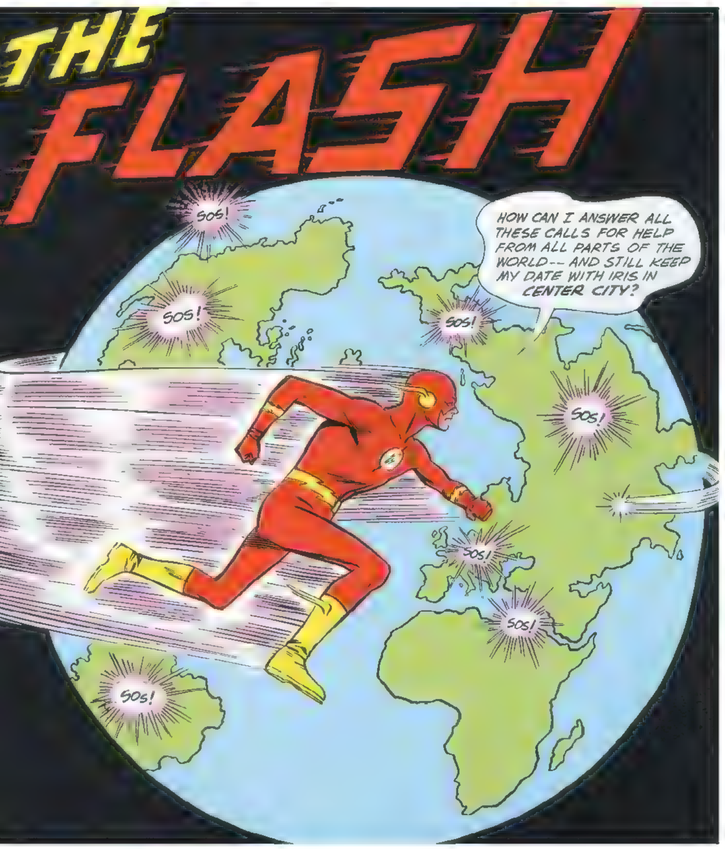
PG 338
If I had a political message in **NEW FRONTIER**, it can be found here. **An ideology requires the judgment and courage to avoid blind allegiance to an administration.**

PG 339
I actually consider this the moment in the story when the major conflict is resolved. When **King Faraday** gets behind **Superman's** leadership, our American heroes are able to see past their own differences and act as a group. For this moment at least, all the lines have been redrawn, and everyone's on the same side.

PG 343
Superman gets his. I call this the **Janet Leigh ploy**. In ***Psycho***, **Hitchcock** killed his lead twenty minutes into the film, leaving the viewer traumatized and wondering what the hell would happen next. This ploy has also been referred to as a **Tom Skerritt (Captain Dallas in *Alien*)**.

PGs 345-348
It was time to step back from our main story one final time. Although a casual reader wouldn't care, any DC alumnus would be wondering why the Golden Age heroes haven't stepped up. This scene featuring DC's "magical" characters allows us some insight into this. It also added an absurd and whimsical break in the middle of a very serious main story. Finally, it completes another difficult task I'd started with **Batman**, **Wonder Woman** and **Superman**—clearing the stage so the heroes of tomorrow could carry the day.

Annotations



Chapter Fifteen
SHALL EARTH ENDURE?

PG 351
JIMMY OLSEN, from the boy at the beginning to the man behind MISS LANE.

PG 352
I always knew I'd show ADAM STRANGE was wrongly incarcerated, but it was a perverse pleasure to think of the STRANGE fans who hated his role in the story up to this point.

PG 355
RAY PALMER is drawn into the story. That magazine really gets around. Because it was too early in the timeline for the story to feature the ATOM, I considered PALMER a cameo at best. Then it occurred to me that the very device he thinks is imperfect would be perfect to combat THE CENTRE.

PG 357
BARRY ALLEN is all man.
PNL THREE: I enjoyed the idea that the characters were so new, there would still be different names for them to different people. Hence, BARRY is the "Illinois Flash" to PALMER.

PG 358
PNL ONE: PROFESSOR NILES CAULDER (The Chief) of DOOM PATROL fame makes a cameo.

PG 359
This scene gets to the essence of BARRY's character at this point in his life. He has tremendous ability and a deep desire to do something meaningful, but up until now he's been "smalltime." SUPERMAN is towing planets while he chases the PIED PIPER around a jewelry store. He's ready to do more and willing to die trying.

Chapter Sixteen
THE DAWN PATROL

PG 361
PNL ONE: BLACKHAWK speaks up. Behind him you can see a young pilot named LARRY TRAINOR.

PG 363
PNL THREE: The "meat popsicle" named HAL JORDAN makes the team complete. It's go time.

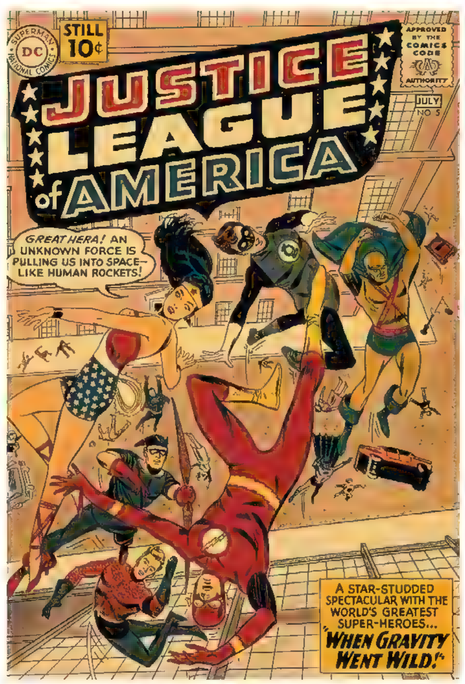
PGs 363-365
If you're going to do a cliché like the double spread of a bunch of superjocks walking toward the "camera," you better put in an effort. This took forever. There was actually a point while I was doing it where I was going to off myself like poor TED SMIESEL. ON THE GANTRY TOP RIGHT, YOU SEE LOIS with a tape recorder. She had some dialogue here, but when we looked at the image, we dropped it.

PG 369
I always loved the kickass way KIRBY drew the ARROWPLANE. Had to include it.

PG 371
PNL TWO: Drawing moments like this make the day at the table worthwhile.

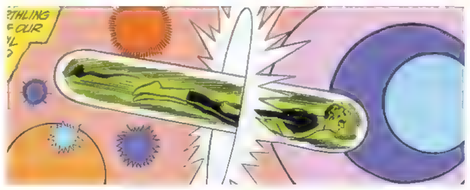
PG 374
KING pays the price, and J'ONN "comes out" with all his awesome power.

PG 378
Taking this meat-and-potatoes action into the psychedelic dimension gives the reader a fresh jolt as we barrel toward the climax. For me, the challenge brought fresh energy at a point where keeping on schedule had me fairly baked. DAVE must have been wearing his tangerine Speedo when he painted this sequence.

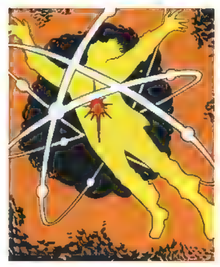


Chapter Seventeen
THE PURE RUGGED

PG 381
It all comes together for HAL at the moment when his choices are to succumb or survive. It is love and responsibility (CAROL and the ring) that propel his actions.



PG 382
FINALLY. After over 340 pages, the SILVER AGE GREEN LANTERN clocks in on the job. Fans rejoice.



PG 383
PNLS TWO AND THREE: I tried to capture the blasé manner these men seem to have on the radio moments before certain death.
PNL FOUR: The notion here is that true to the existing DC timeline, STEVE DITKO's NATHANIEL ADAM (CAPTAIN ATOM) disappears in a nuclear incident on the Cape.

PG 385
PNL ONE: RED's story about the dolphins is a clue that perhaps a certain SEA KING is working to do his part behind the scenes.

PG 388
BARRY ALLEN saves the world on his first big day. Just like he will on his last big day.

PGs 391-393
HAL JORDAN, GREEN LANTERN for Space Sector 2814. My childhood superhero of choice.

PGs 395-396
For the fourteen months that **NEW FRONTIER** was in production, hardly a day went by that I wasn't plagued by how the story would end. When it came down to it, these two pages wrote themselves quite effortlessly. As you can see, AQUAMAN put his shirt on to come calling.

Epilogue
THE NEW FRONTIER

I had always known that this speech of KENNEDY'S would close out the book. KENNEDY'S actual qualities as a person and a leader may be debatable, but the power and scope of these words is still felt upon reading them over 45 years later. With KENNEDY, it was never the man that impressed me; it was the ideal he embodied. In that way, he typifies the spirit that charges the super-hero stories of the Silver Age. Not to be taken at anything but face value, an impossible ideal that points up a better way to live.

PG 399
PNL TWO: Young JOHN HENRY IRONS soaks up the inspiration at the gravesite of JOHN HENRY.
PNL THREE: Dirty old LEX LUTHOR.

PG 402
This page was a blast to draw. New heroes featured included DOC MAGNUS'S METAL MEN and the DOOM PATROL.

PG 403
PNL ONE: THE TEEN TITANS, SUPERGIRL, and BLACK CANARY.
PNL TWO: Bring on the bad guys. Clockwise: SINESTRO, BRAINIAC, SOLOMON GRUNDY, MR. MXYZPTLK, GRODD, STAR SAPPHIRE, CHEETAH, GENTLEMAN GHOST, DR. LIGHT, BLACK MANTA, TWO-FACE, DR. SIVANA and DARKSEID.

PGs 404-405
The gang's all here, including ANIMAL MAN, HAWKMAN and HAWKGIRL, METAMORPHO, CAPTAIN MARVEL, VIGILANTE and PLASTIC MAN.

PG 408
As promised, we end where it began—the first public appearance of the JUSTICE LEAGUE OF AMERICA.

DEDICATIONS

The original series featured dedications to the artists and writers who inspired my youth. Each book featured four dedications excepting Book Six, which went to the King.

BOB KANIGHER
JOE KUBERT
HARVEY KURTZMAN
ALEX TOTH
GARDNER FOX
CARMINE INFANTINO
JOHNNY CRAIG
BERNARD KRIGSTEIN
BILL FINGER
DICK SPRANG
JOE SIMON
JACK DAVIS
JOHN BROOME
WILL EISNER
FRANK FRAZETTA
WALLY WOOD
JULIUS SCHWARTZ
ARCHIE GOODWIN
GIL KANE
RUSS HEATH
JACK KIRBY

Sketchbook

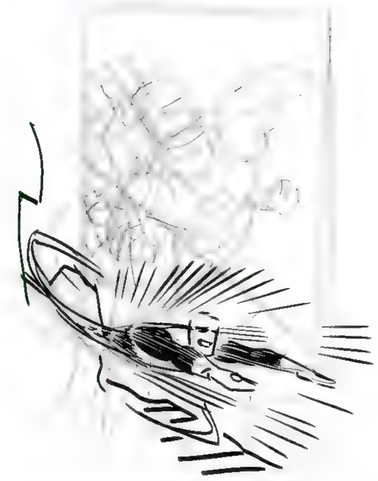
The following is a look at a variety of unpublished or rarely seen artwork developed over the five years NEW FRONTIER evolved. Several of these pieces were created in an effort to achieve the mood of the era or capture key moments in the narrative.

Albion

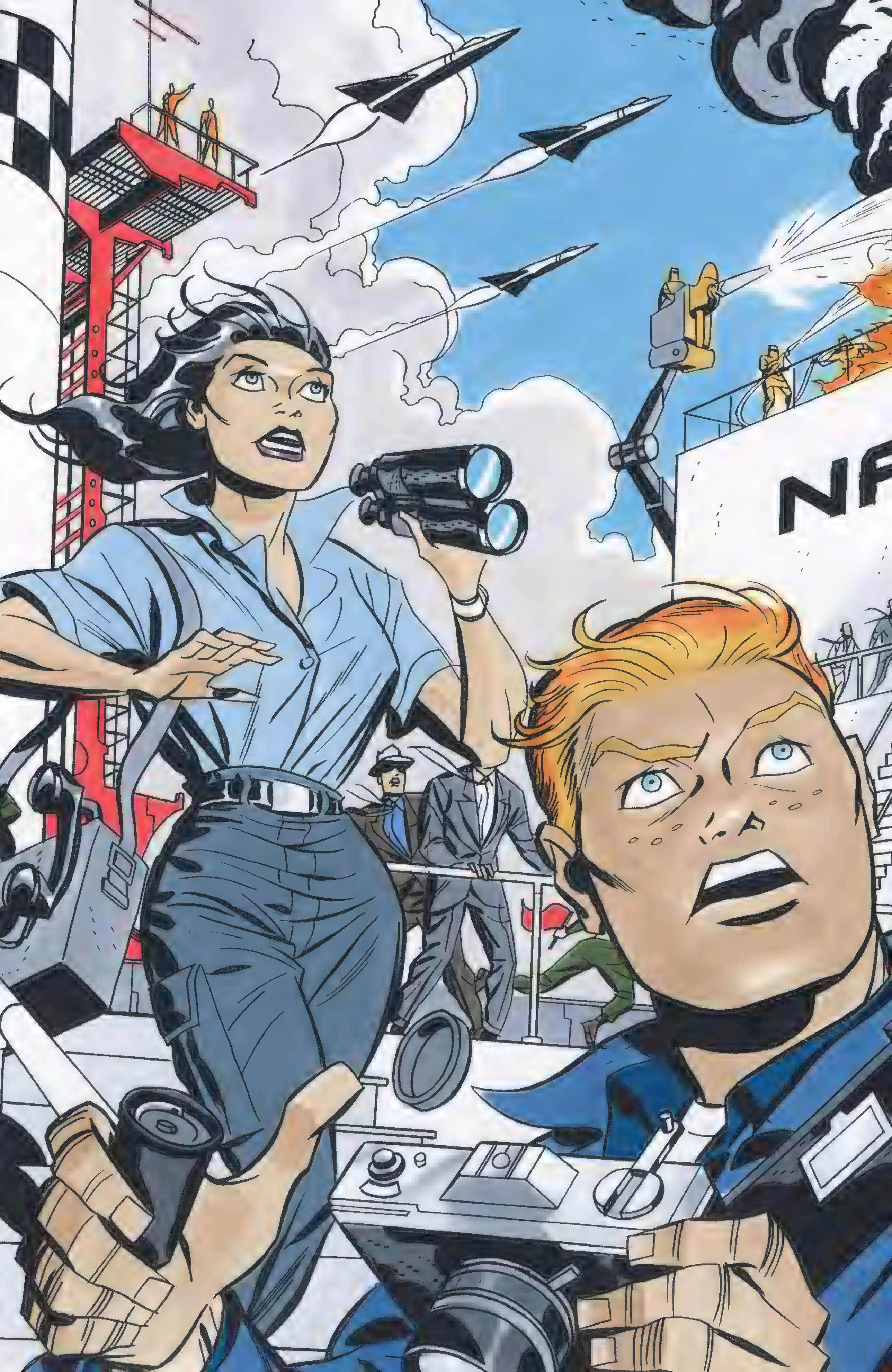
ACE
FLAGG

Hal Jordan was designed as a cartoon of my favorite '50s actor, Burt Lancaster.

The four headshots (upper left) were the drawings that nailed it for me.



Here are several pieces done early on as we searched for a cover approach. On the right is a very Kirby Superman. My original idea for the book was to stylize it in a very Kirby way, but saner heads prevailed. The following spread features other scenes from the book in the Kirby style.



Here we have character designs, including cast busts from very early on. John Henry was originally going to have a far more colonial feel, to echo the war for independence, but I opted to avoid the comparison. Still looks cool, I think. Black Canary never really made it into the story, and Cobalt was an original character that I decided to drop.

JOHN JONES

BRUCE WAYNE

CLARK KENT

BARRY ALLEN

ACE MORGAN

HAL JORDAN

CAROL FERRIS

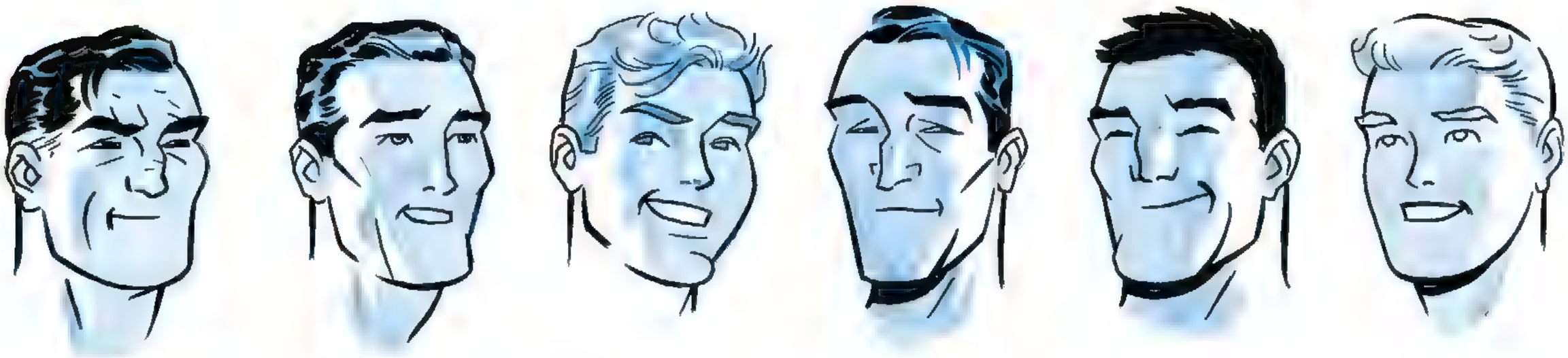
JUNE ROBBINS

LANA LANG

LOIS LANE

IRIS WEST

SELINA KYLE



TED GRANT

RAY PALMER

RED RYAN

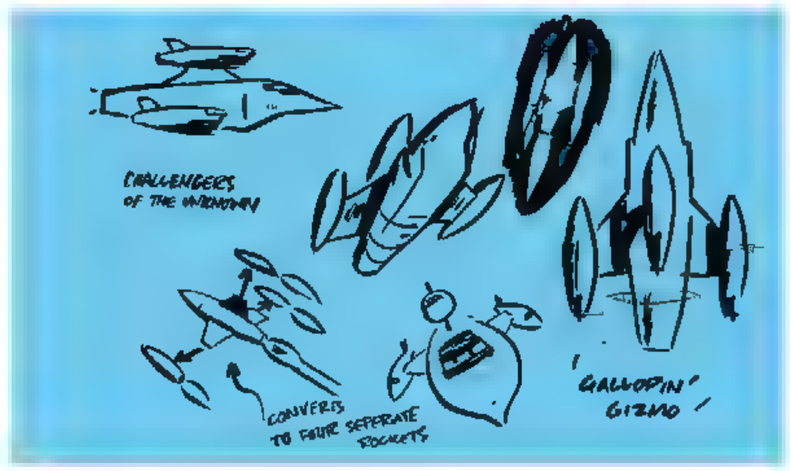
PROF. HALEY

ROCKY

JIMMY OLSEN

CHALLENGERS OF THE UNKNOWN

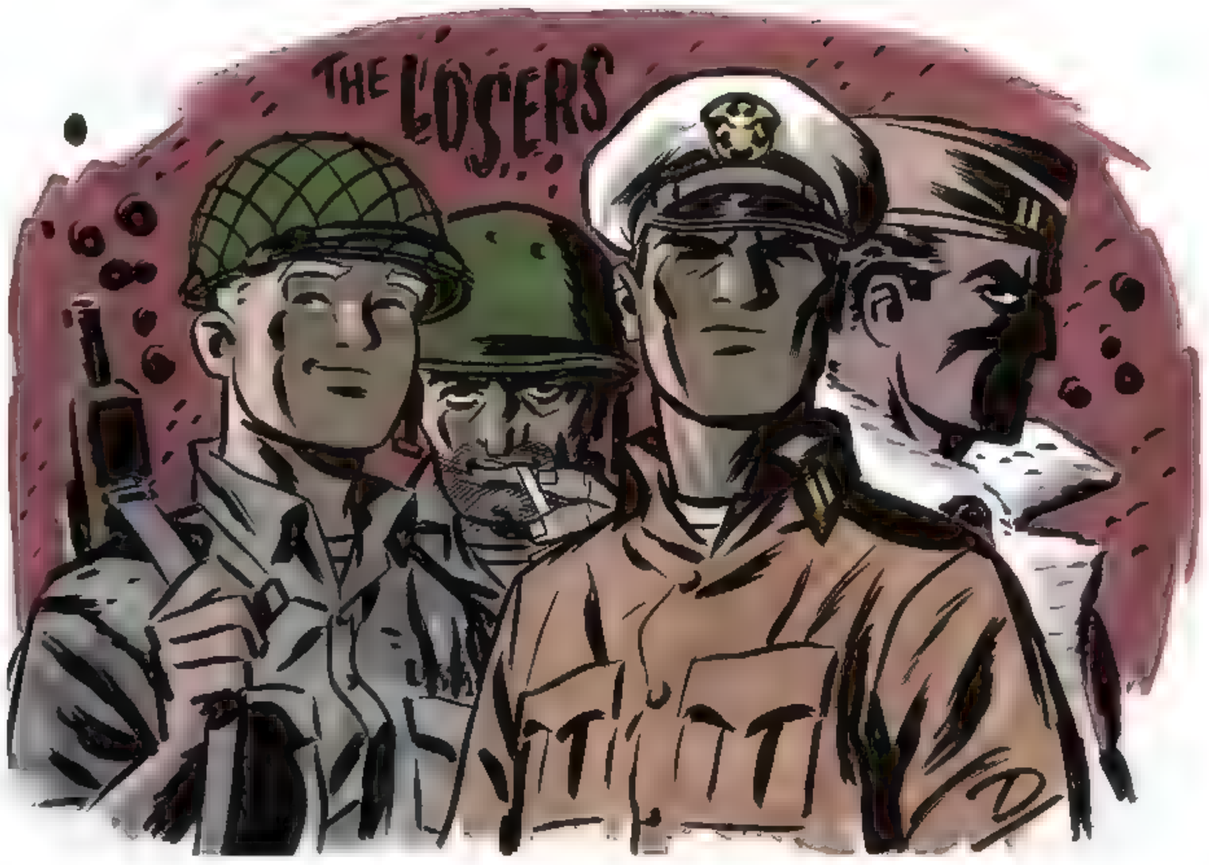
MORGAN



I simply could not draw the Challengers enough.

JUNE ROBBINS
Challengers of the Unknown

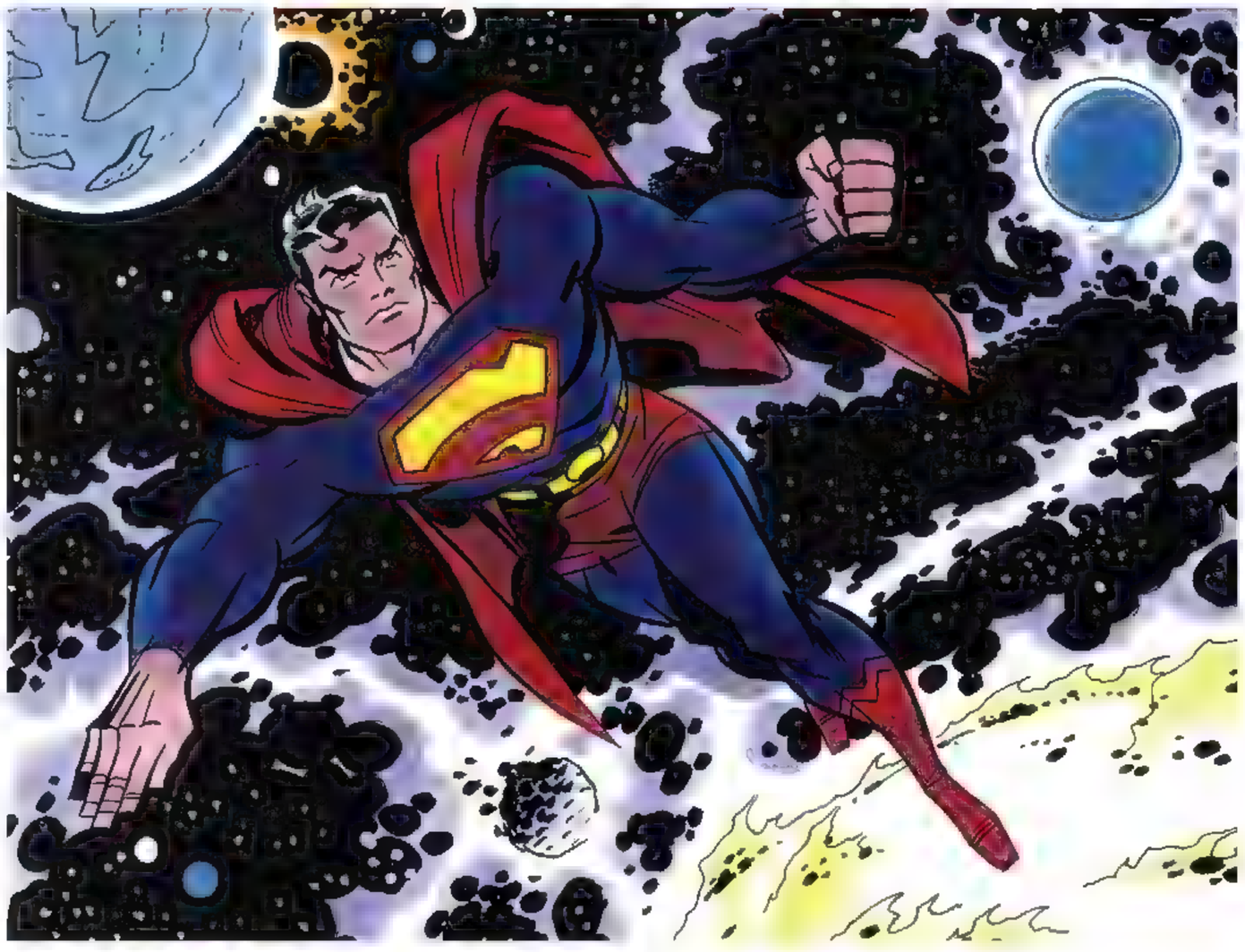
Here we see the Suicide Squad and the Losers. I confess that the "real" people in NEW FRONTIER were the most fun to draw. The dialogue on the right is taken straight from a vintage Kanigher script.



WE'RE HEADING INTO A STORM!

THERE'S ONLY ONE STORM WHEN I'M NEAR YOU RICK-THE ONE IN MY HEART!!

DC
THE NEW
FRONTIER

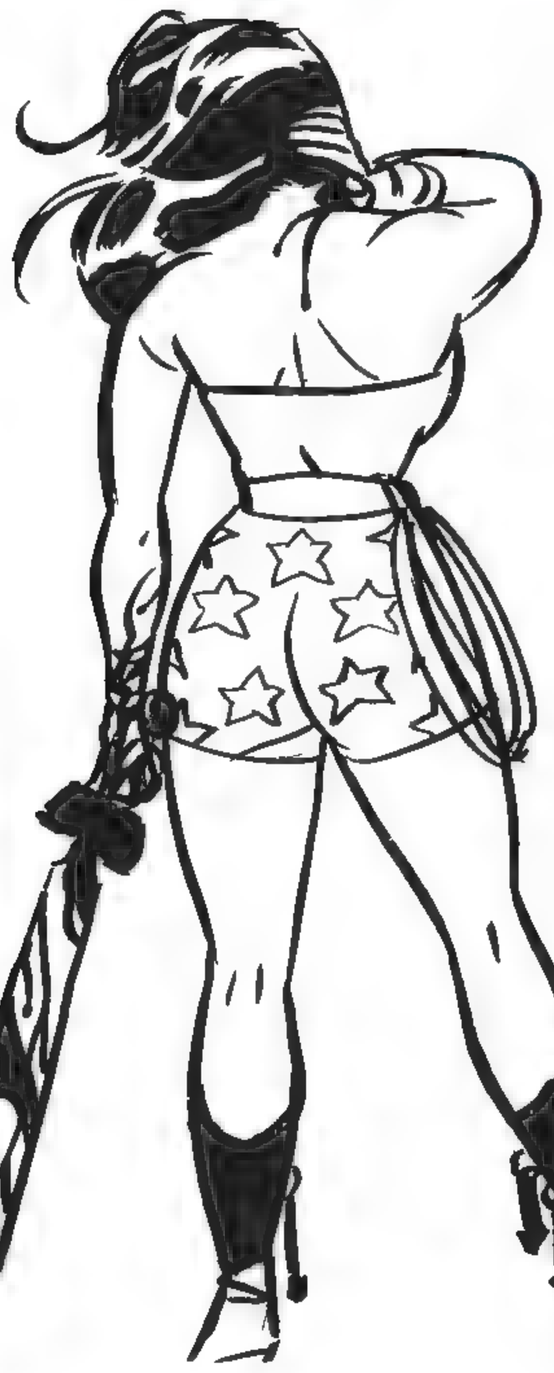


SUPERMAN • DC • NATIONAL COMICS

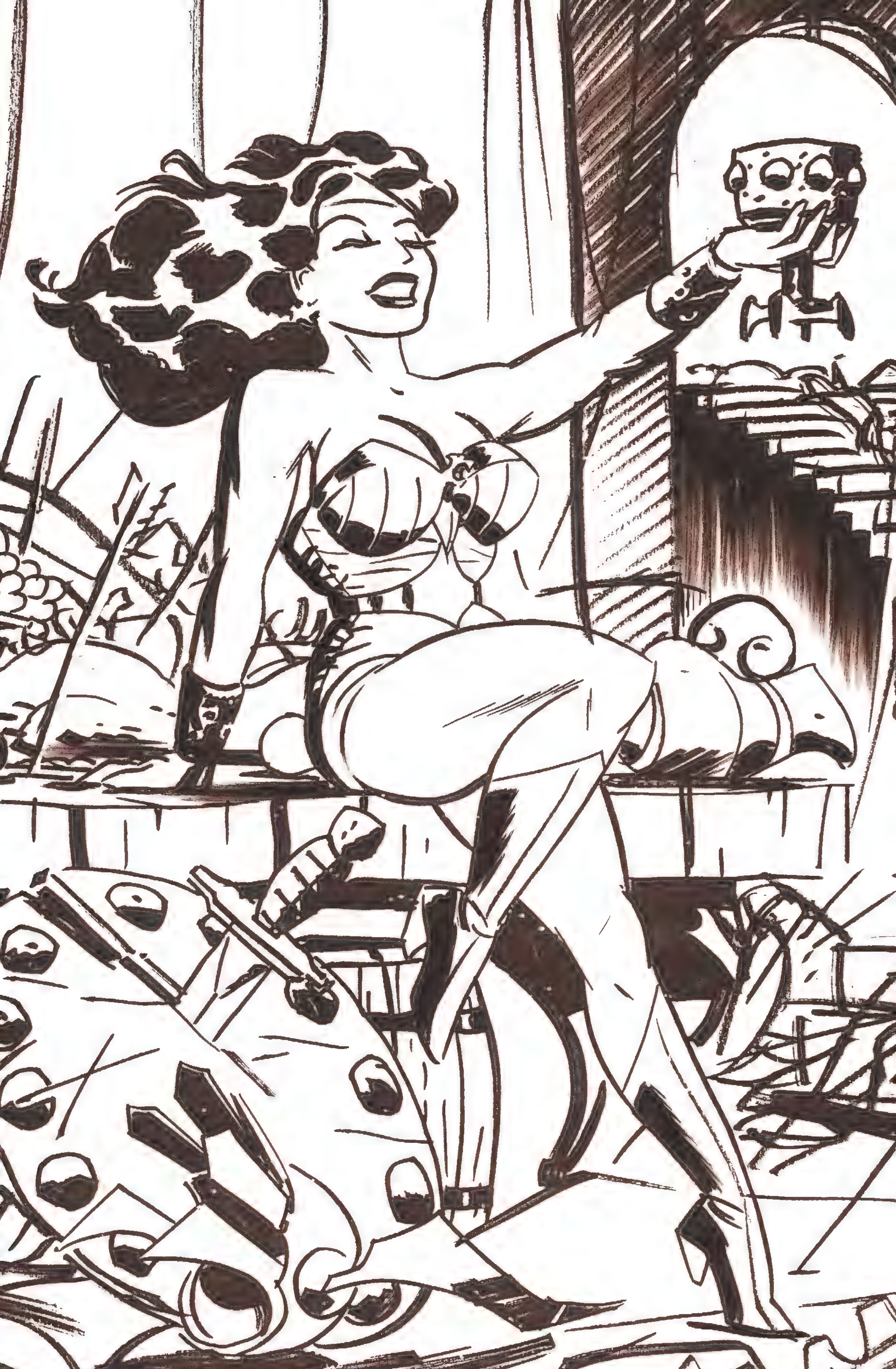
ACTION COMICS

APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY

THE SUPER
DUEL IN
SPACE!"



Finally, the design of which I'm most proud, my ever-lovin' Amazon Princess.



Behind the Scenes

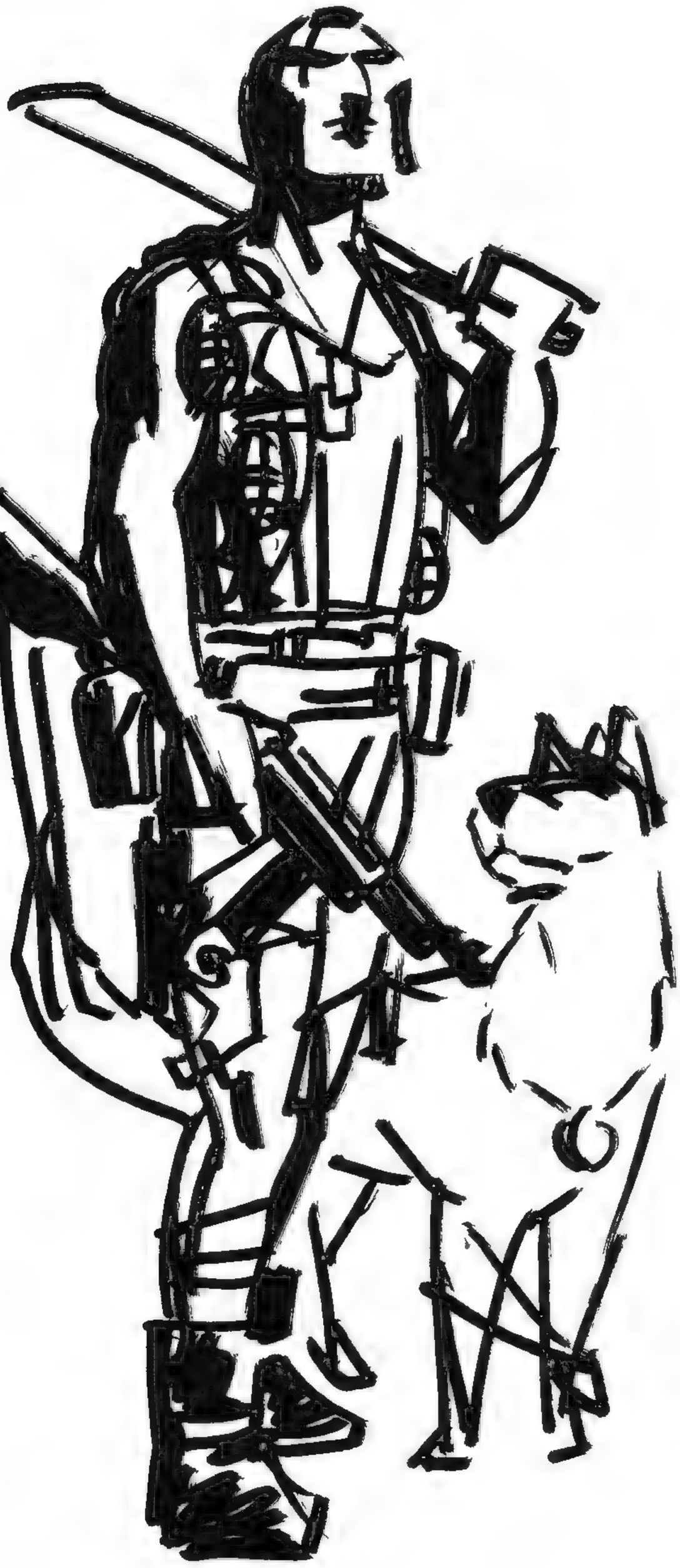
I DON'T KNOW THAT THE PROCESS I GO THROUGH TO CREATE A STORY IS UNIQUE, SO I'LL KEEP THIS BRIEF.

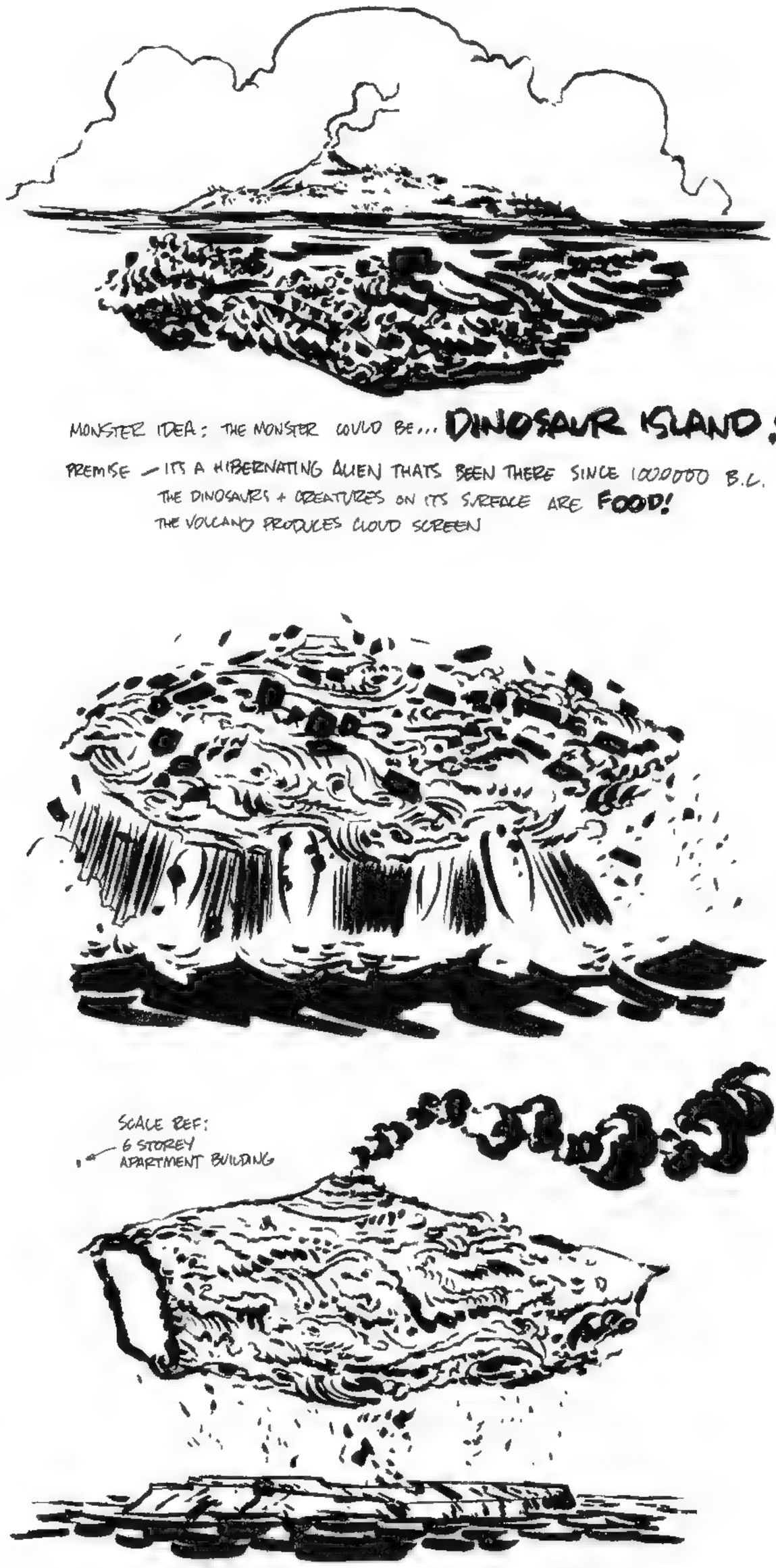
MOST CORPORATE COMICS INVOLVE A COLLABORATIVE TEAM TO PRODUCE THE SCRIPT AND ART,

BUT AS A CARTOONIST, I HAVE THE LUXURY OF CONTROLLING BOTH SIDES OF THE CREATIVE EQUATION.

I'll start with the mental legwork of piecing together a plot, motivation and character growth. When I'm happy with my basic story, I might make some point-form notes, but I will generally approach story construction through the visuals. After some rough design work on characters or important locations and props, I move straight to thumbnailing the story. I find that I can achieve the best pacing and layout by building my story through pictures as opposed to words. I believe that comics should use words and pictures in a complementary fashion, and by visualizing the action first, I can judge how much of the story's message is coming through clearly in pictures. This helps me avoid overwriting or the deadly redundancy of a caption describing the action pictured.

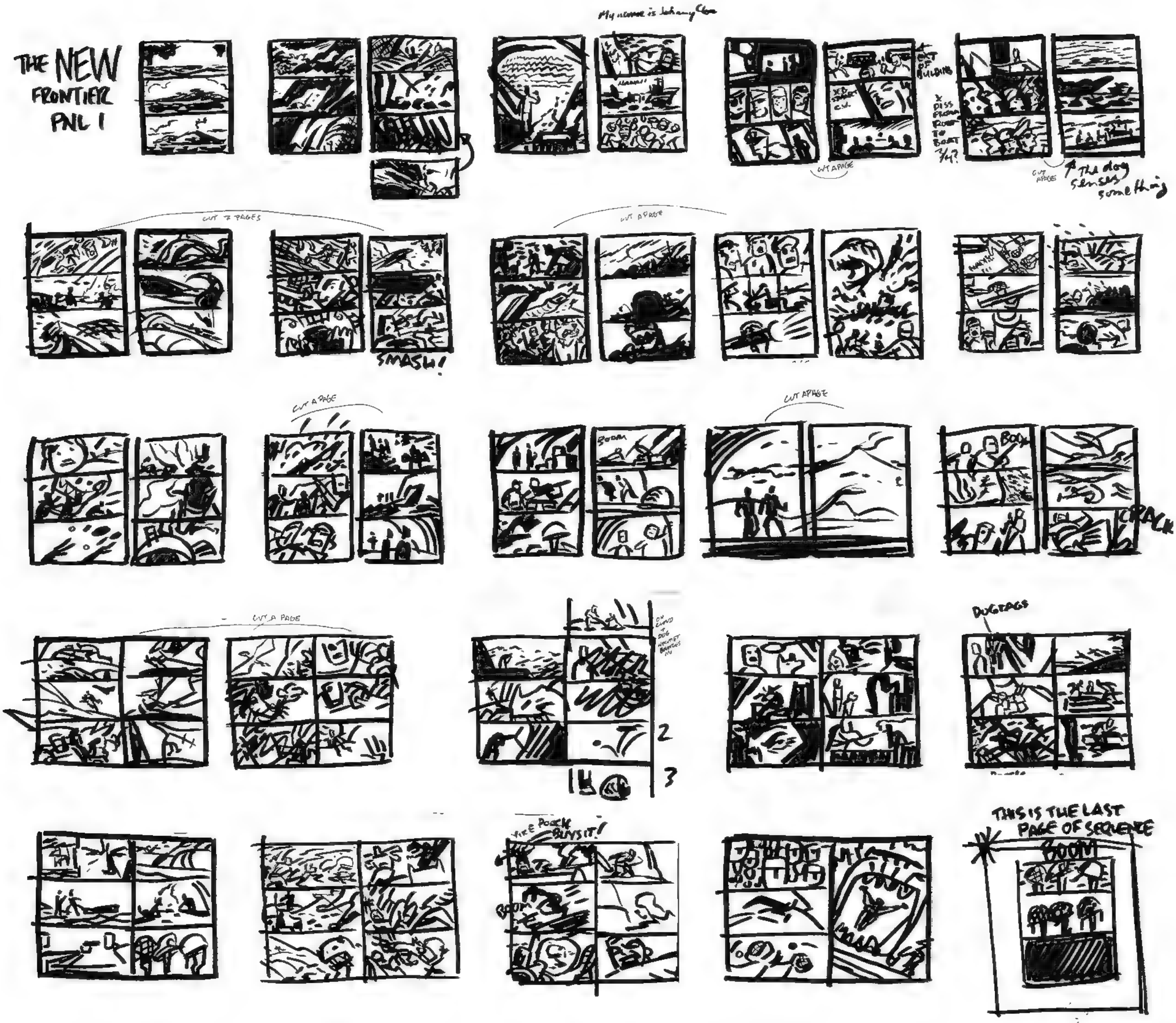
The other real advantage I find to this approach is that by drawing my characters in action and hitting their story beats with the visual acting of the emotional moment, I get to know them better and have the time to consider their dialogue and reactions to the unfolding drama.





Above left: Johnny Cloud and Pooch.
Above right: Dinosaur Island and how it works.

Below: Thumbnails for the entire first sequence. If you've got a magnifying glass, you'll note several changes between the original thumbs and the final pages.

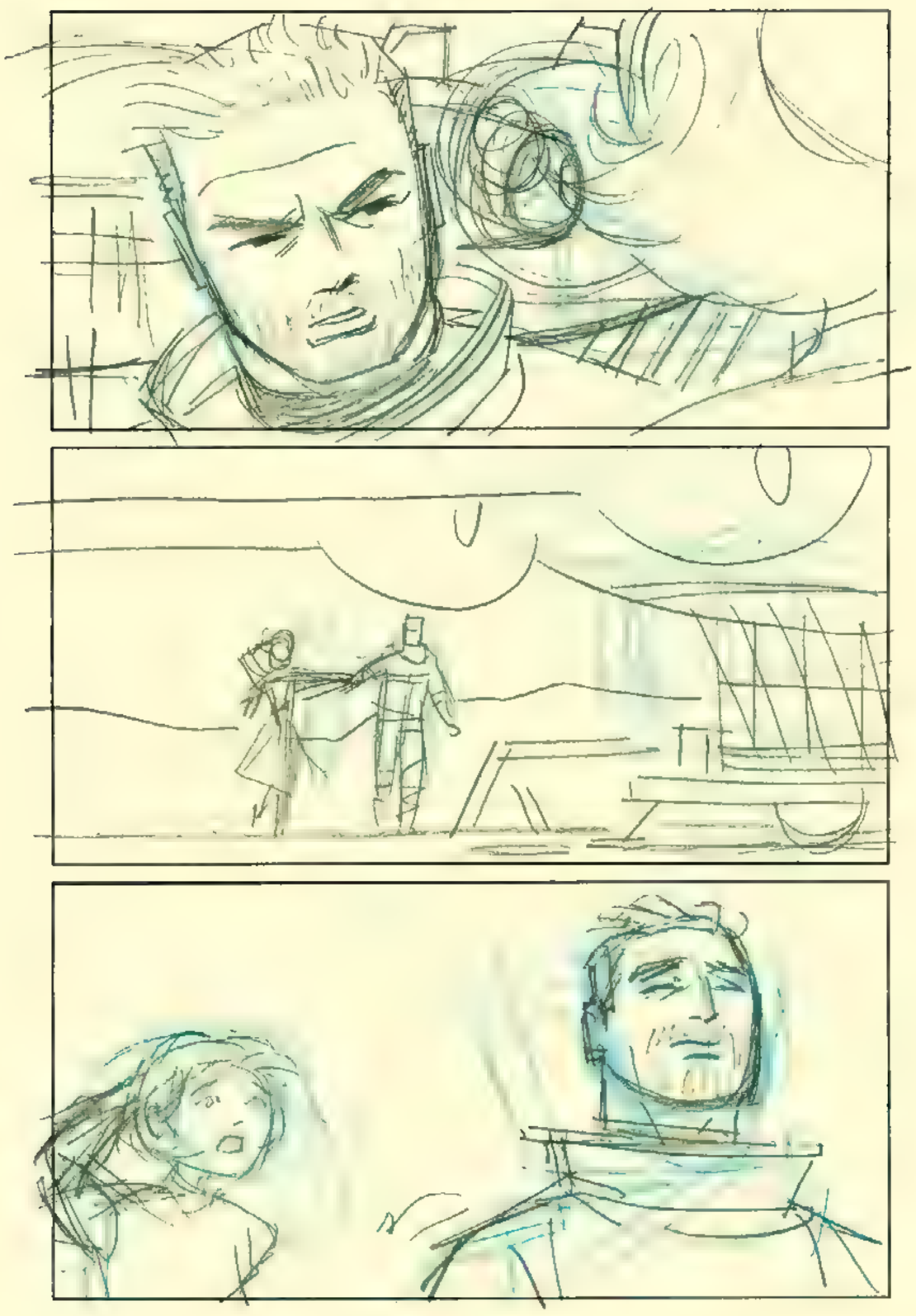


Once I have my sequence thumbnailed, I move to the page and lay out the story. From that point it is a simple matter of pencil and brush mileage to finish the artwork. The script is generally written in finished form in tandem with this process.

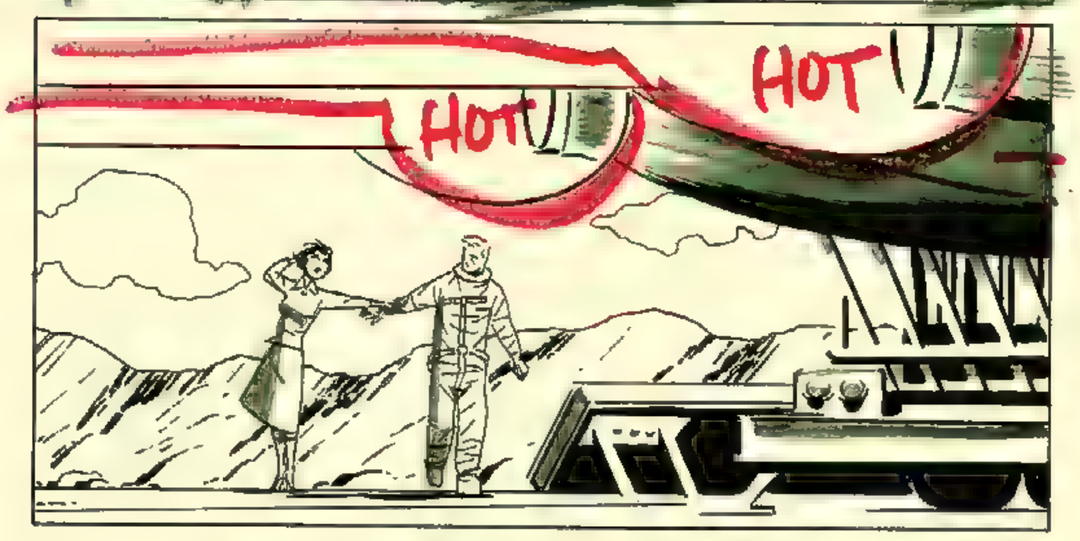
On **NEW FRONTIER**, I was blessed with two collaborators who brought these words and line drawings to vivid life. Depending on how pressed for time we were, either myself or editor Mark Chiarello would do balloon placement, and the script and art would go to Jared Fletcher, the incredibly talented young man who lettered this rambling tome. Jared had the daunting task of interpreting my idea of how a comic from the '50s should be lettered and creating it digitally. Considering the series took place twenty years before Jared made the scene, I think he's done a masterful job of capturing the era.

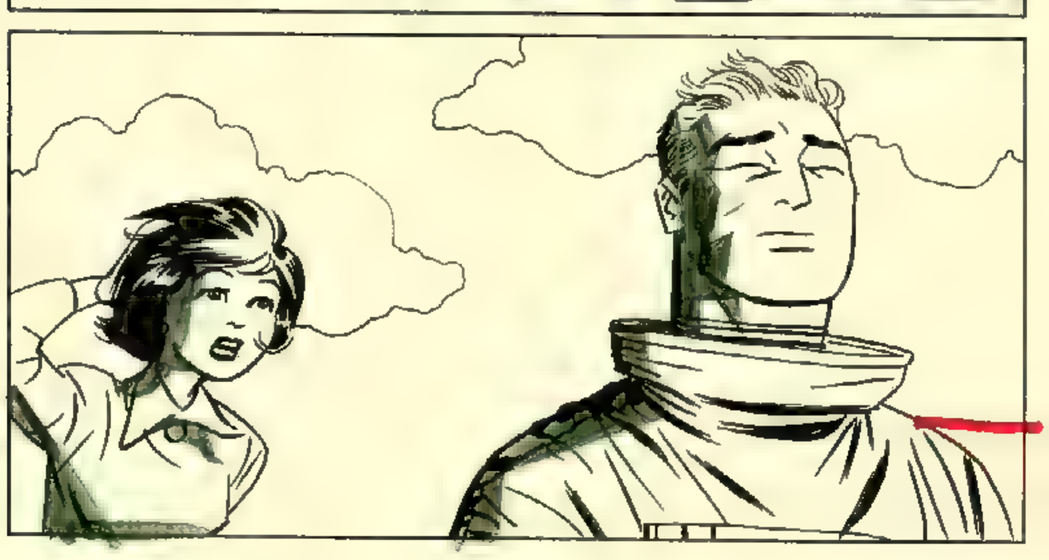
As for the artwork, it's only halfway there at that point. I used a set of copies to mark shadow guides and any lighting or color notes, and those were forwarded to Dave Stewart, **FRONTIER**'s color artist. In terms of process, this was the easiest part of my job. Sit back and wait to get blown away by Dave's vision of the FRONTIER era. Dave's color is the stuff of legend, but I'd like to point out that he is an artist in his own right, and that talent is reflected in every page of **FRONTIER**. The structure and form he was able to build within my simple shapes is nothing short of incredible.

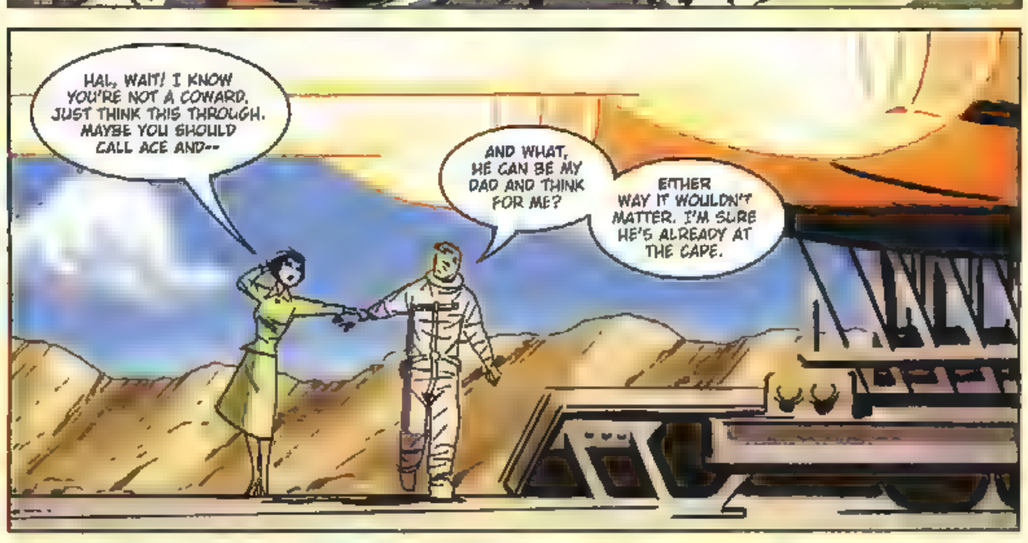
And that, as they say, is that. A few color tweaks and a little proofing, and we're off duty.

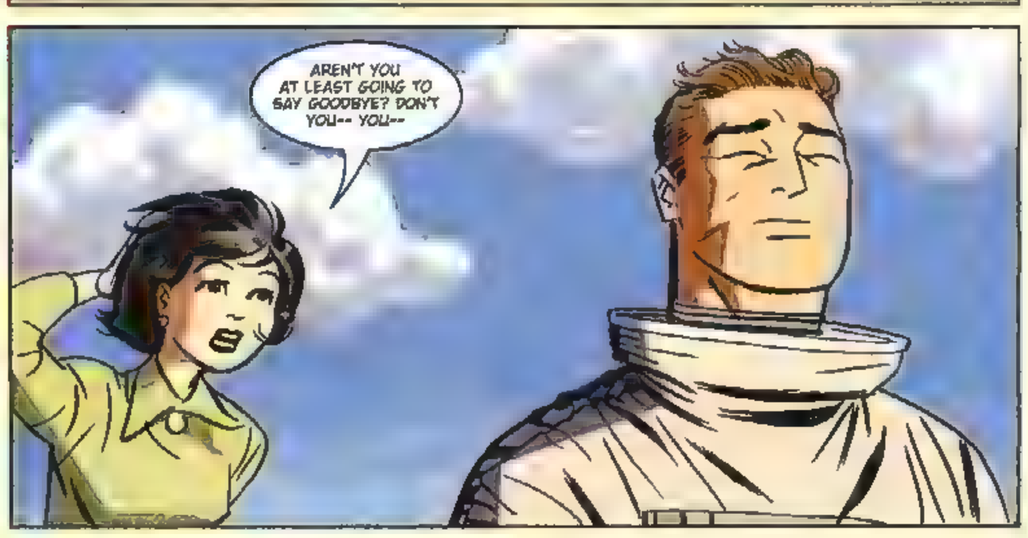


52









STEP BY STEP: *[top left] Pencil layout for page. I try to keep this loose if I can. [top right] Finished inks with Jared's lettering in place. Note I dropped Hal's five o'clock shadow. [Bottom left] Shadow guides and color notes for Dave. [Bottom right] Dave's finished page.*

CONTROL OF
ADOLPH HITLER'S LEGENDARY
THE LEGENDARY 'SPEAR OF DESTINY'
KEPT THE SUPER HEROES OUT
OF THE GREAT WAR.

IN THE END IT WAS MORTAL MEN
AND WOMEN WHO CARRIED THE DAY
IN THE BATTLEFIELDS OF EUROPE
AND NORTH AFRICA.

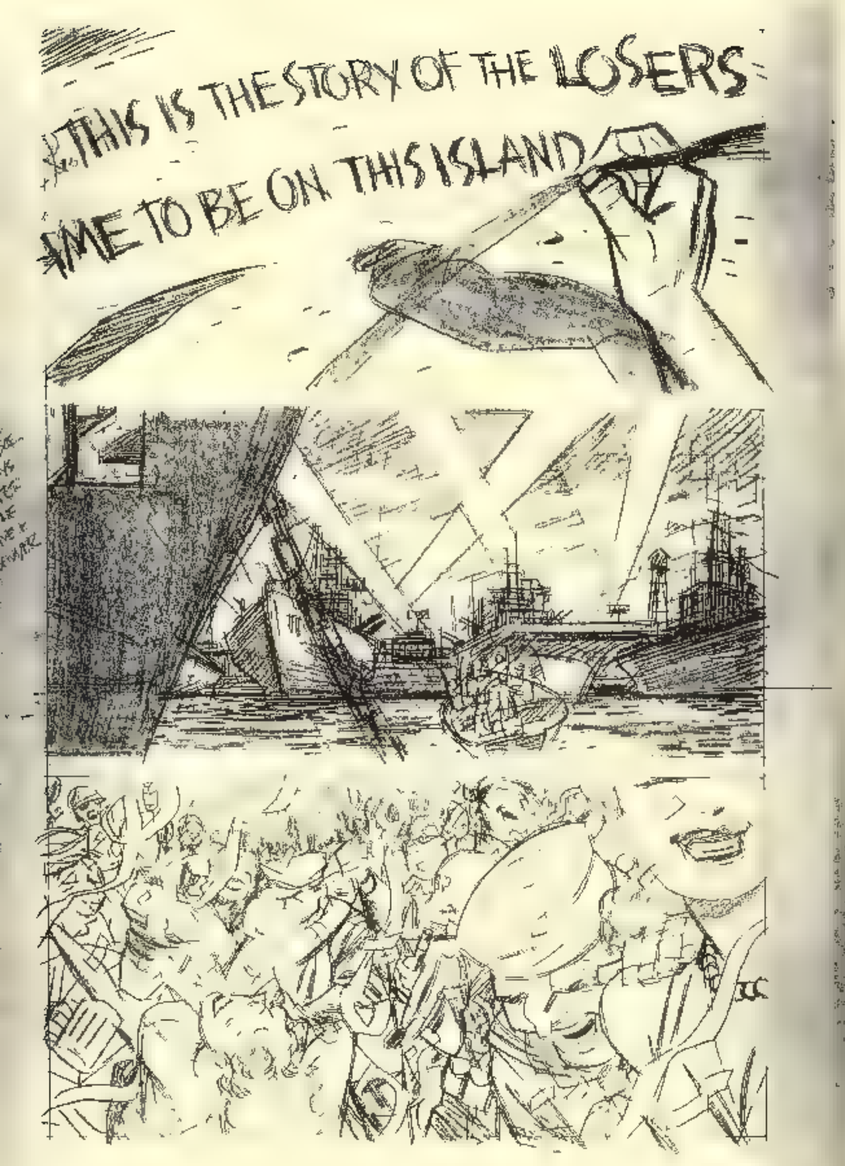
THE CONCLUSION OF THE WAR
IN THE PACIFIC
WAS ANOTHER STORY.

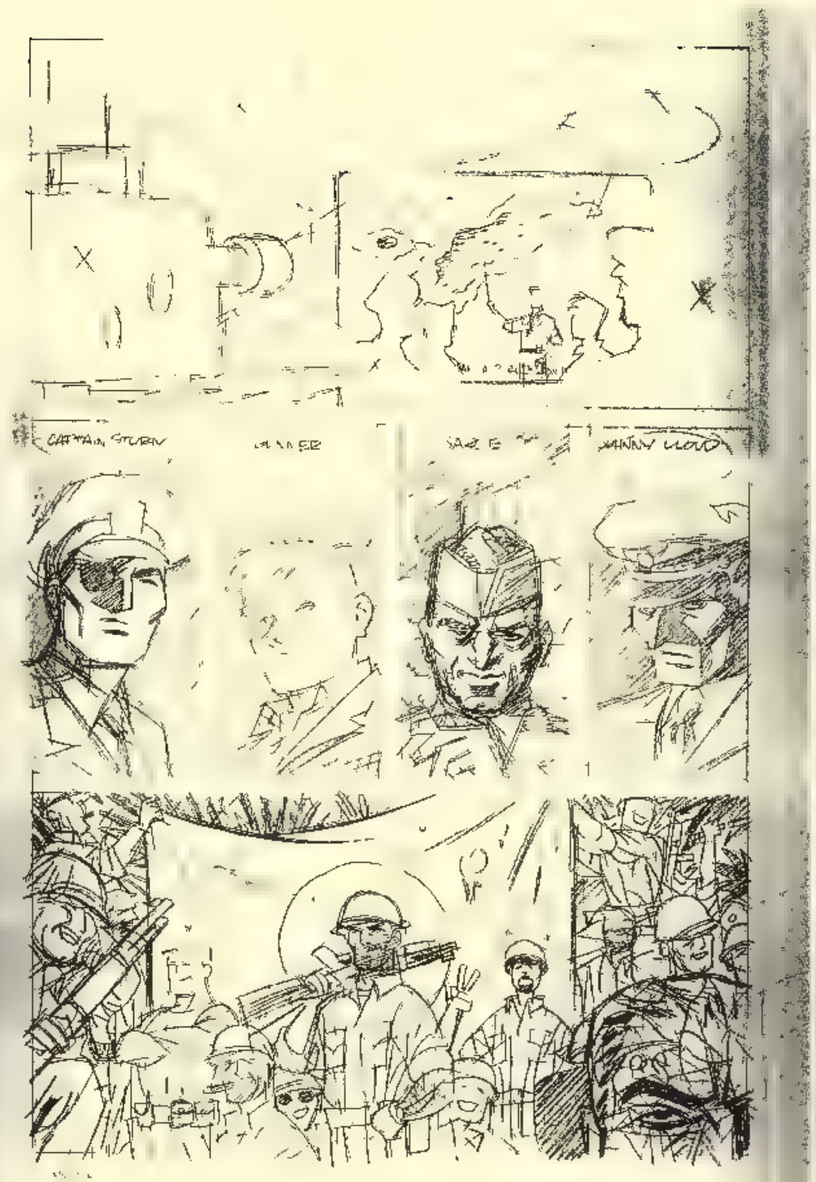
THE ADVENT OF NUCLEAR WARFARE
GAVE MAN THE ABILITY TO DESTROY
THE WORLD SEVERAL TIMES OVER.

WITHIN SCANT YEARS OF THIER
ALLIANCE TO DEFEAT THE NAZIS,
THE CHASM BETWEEN AMERICAN
AND RUSSIAN IDEOLOGIES DEEPENED.

WITH A DEADLY CORDON OF WARHEADS
WARHEADS CREATING A STALEMATE,
THE 'COLD WAR' BEGAN -- AN ERA
OF ESPIONAGE, BLACKMAIL AND
NATIONALISTIC PROPAGANDA.

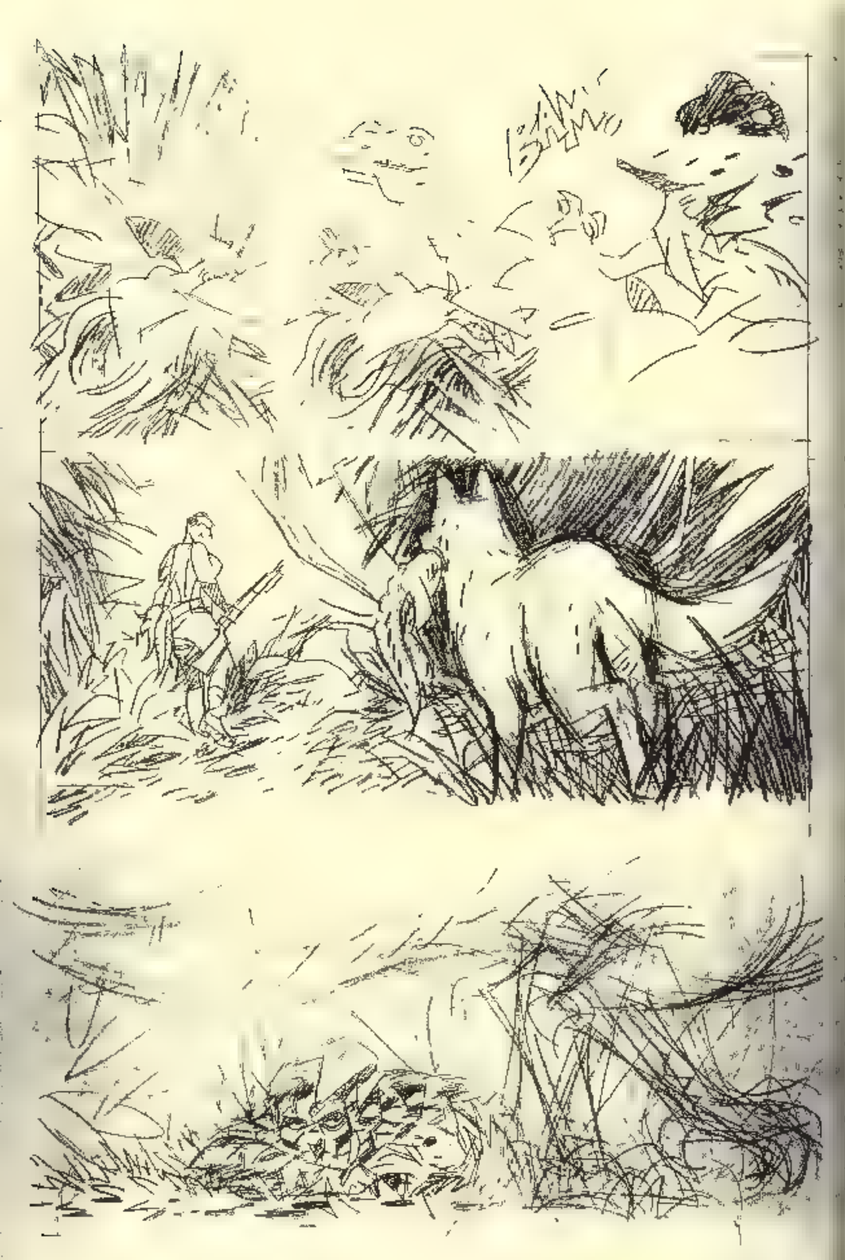
Sometimes I get all the way to finished art before I change my mind. This page was ready to go before I decided on a more action-oriented approach.

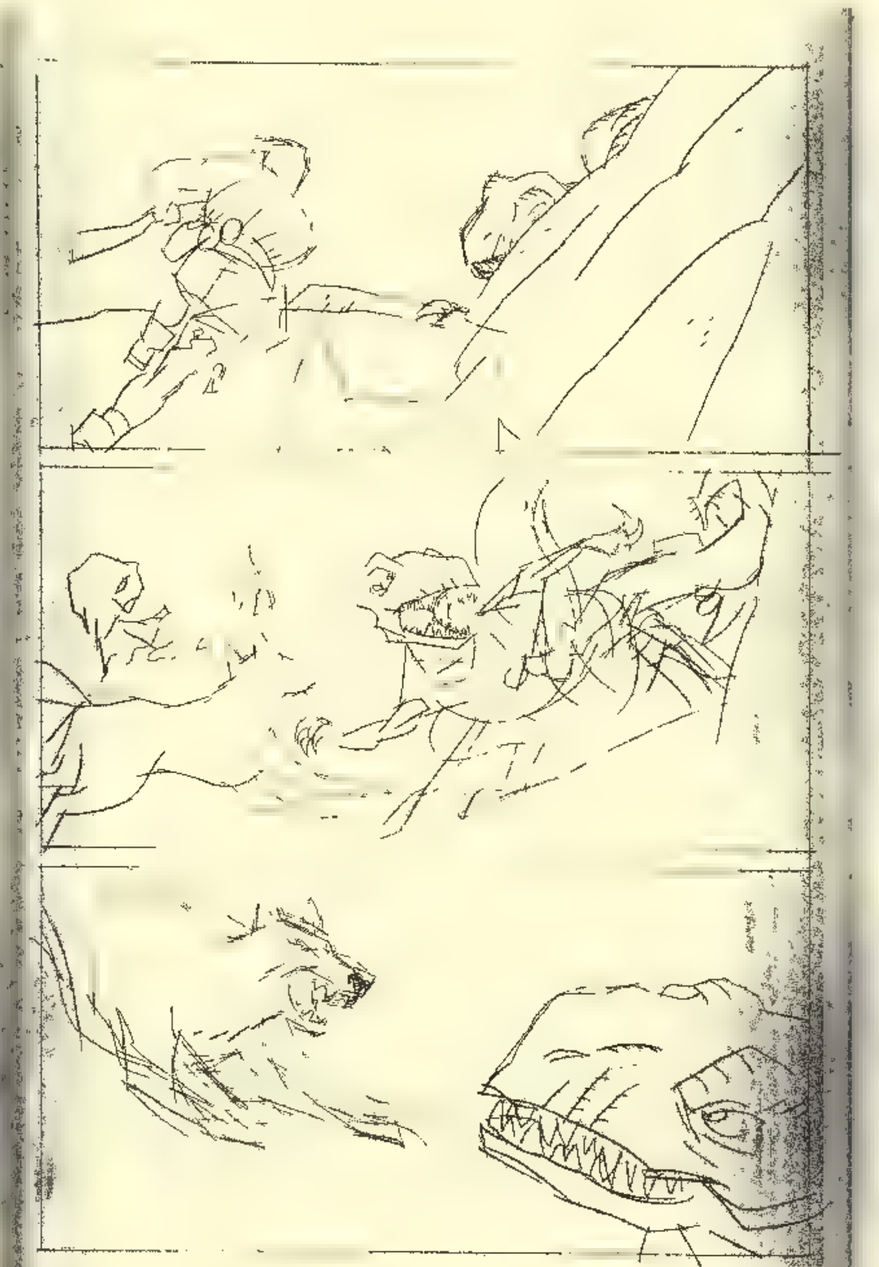


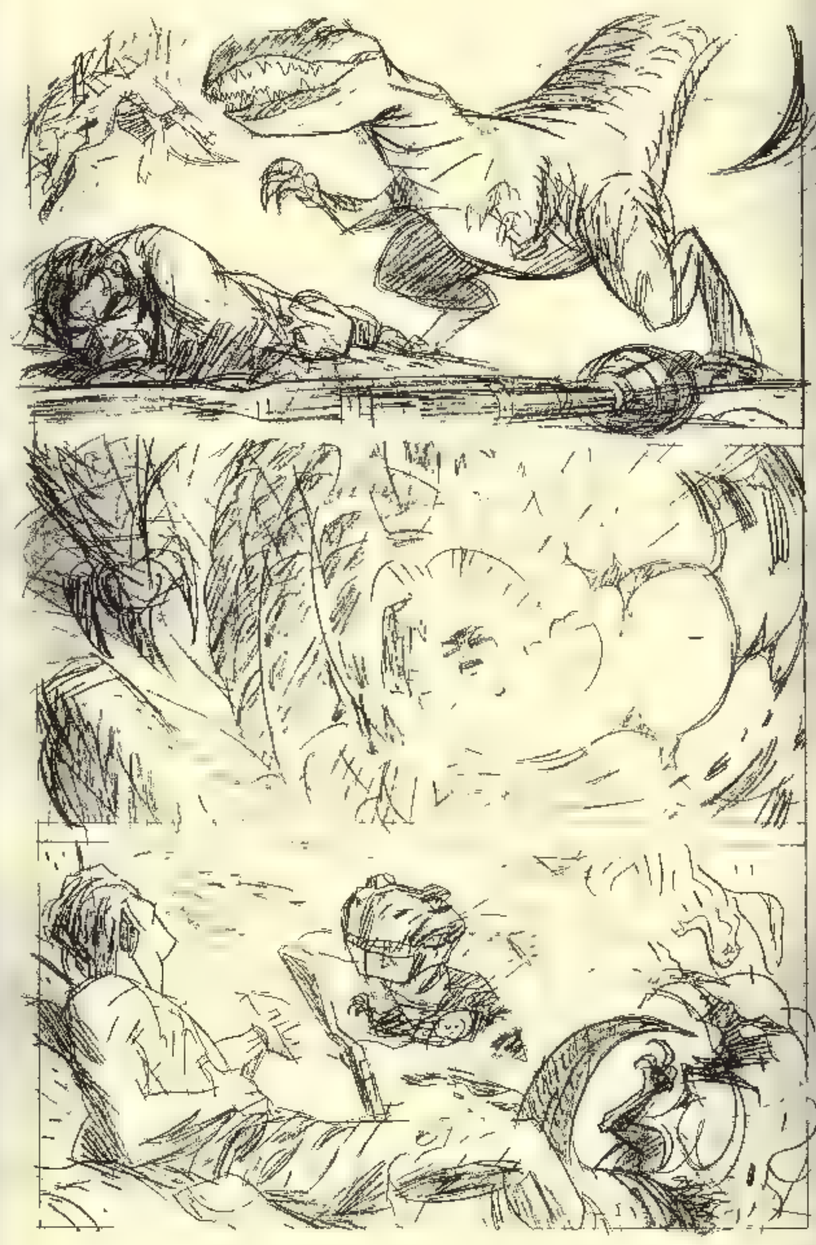


Above: Unpublished sequence shows the Losers briefed for their mission.
This was cut for length and to allow for a more provocative open in the middle of the situation.
Below: This unpublished sequence shows that the original story had a raptor kill Pooch and mortally wound Cloud.
I realized the irony of having Cloud brought down by Flagg's booby trap was more fitting, and started again.

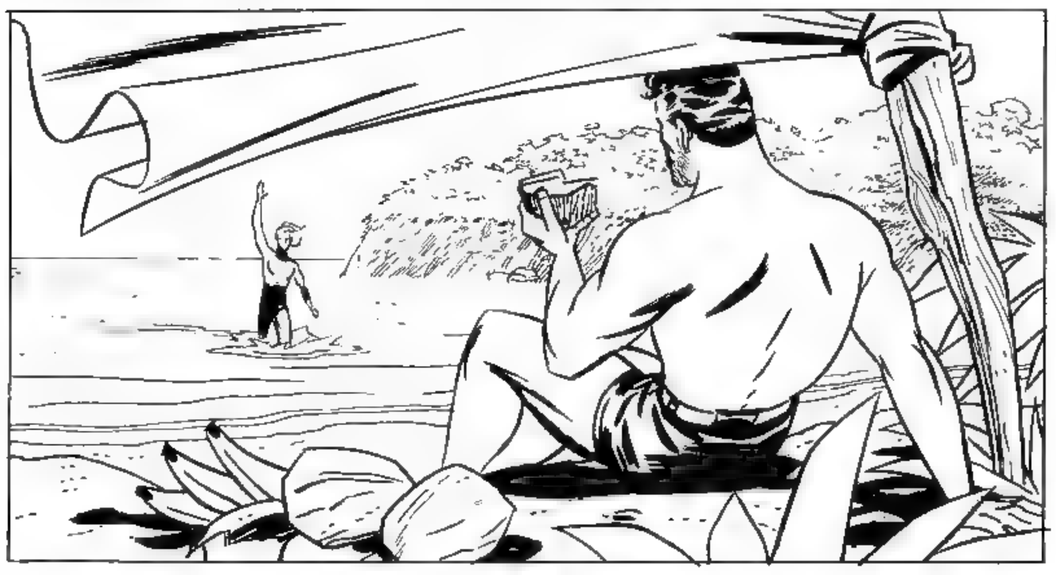
Right: First stab at Ted (Wildcat) Grant's final victory.

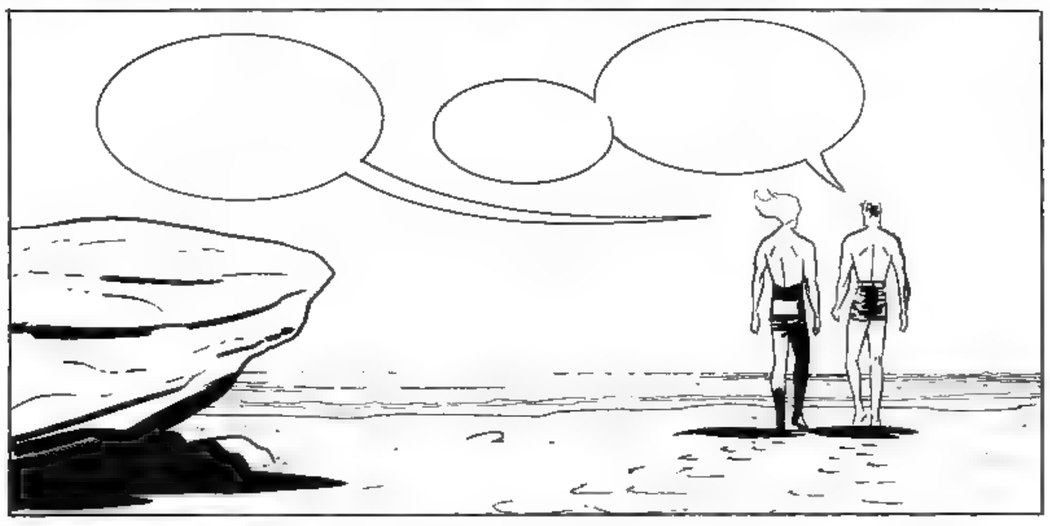


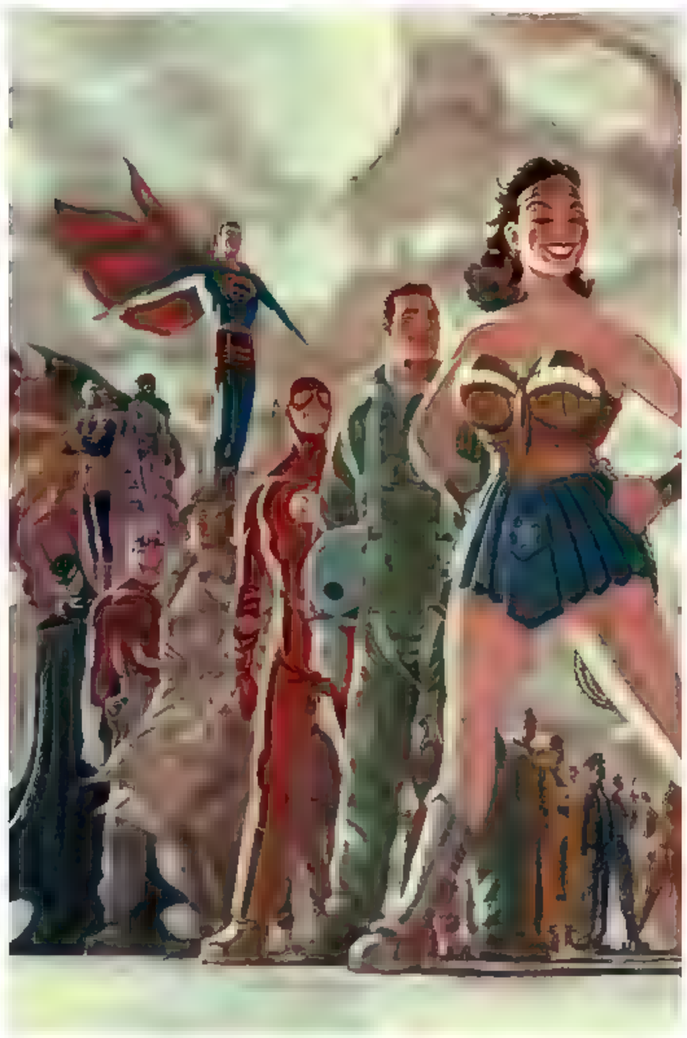


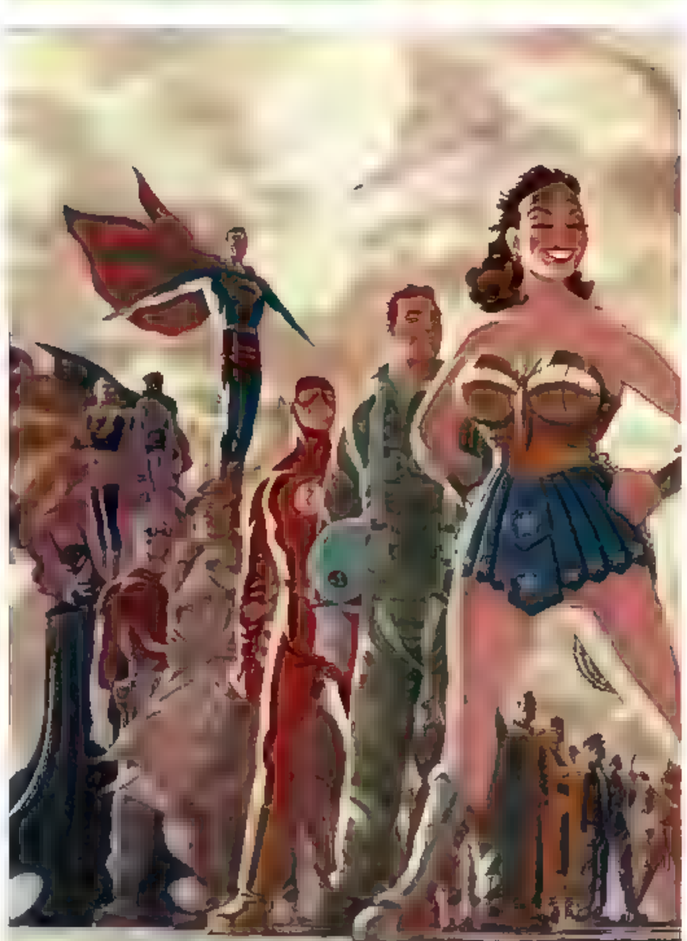


I AM THIER CHAMPION.









THE END THAT NEVER WAS: *[Above] FRONTIER's original ending was far more cautionary and downbeat. In the epilogue we were to discover that Superman has been recovering on a remote island, after being saved by Aquaman. The two of them were to discuss and reflect on the madness and beauty of the human race. In the end, I decided it was too low-key and introspective. I also thought it was kinda...well, gay. Not that there's anything wrong with that—just not the vibe I wanted to hit at the end of this particular tale.*

IN THE PAINT: *Much to my horror, I attempted oil painting for the trade paperback covers. It was the first time I'd touched oils in about twenty years. I'm not really thrilled with my efforts, but here's a look at the step-by-step.*

1. left: Thumbnail sketch

2. left: Line drawing for canvas transfer

3. this page: Tonal rendering for reference

4. left: Untouched raw scan of painting

5. left: The digitally massaged finished piece

Following pages: The final printed covers.

DC: The New Frontier

Volume One

by DARWYN COOKE with Dave Stewart

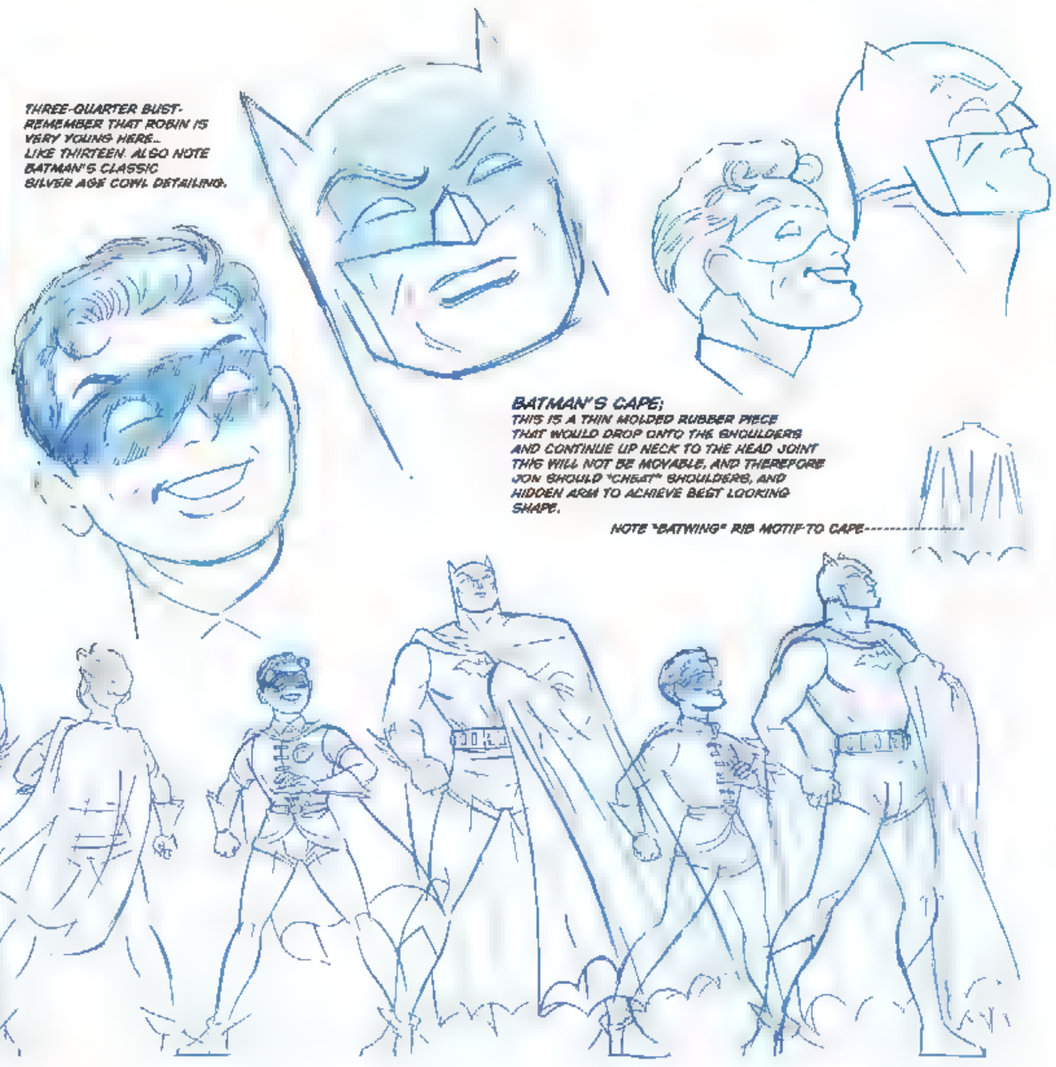
The New Frontier

Volume Two

by DARWYN COOKE with Dave Stewart

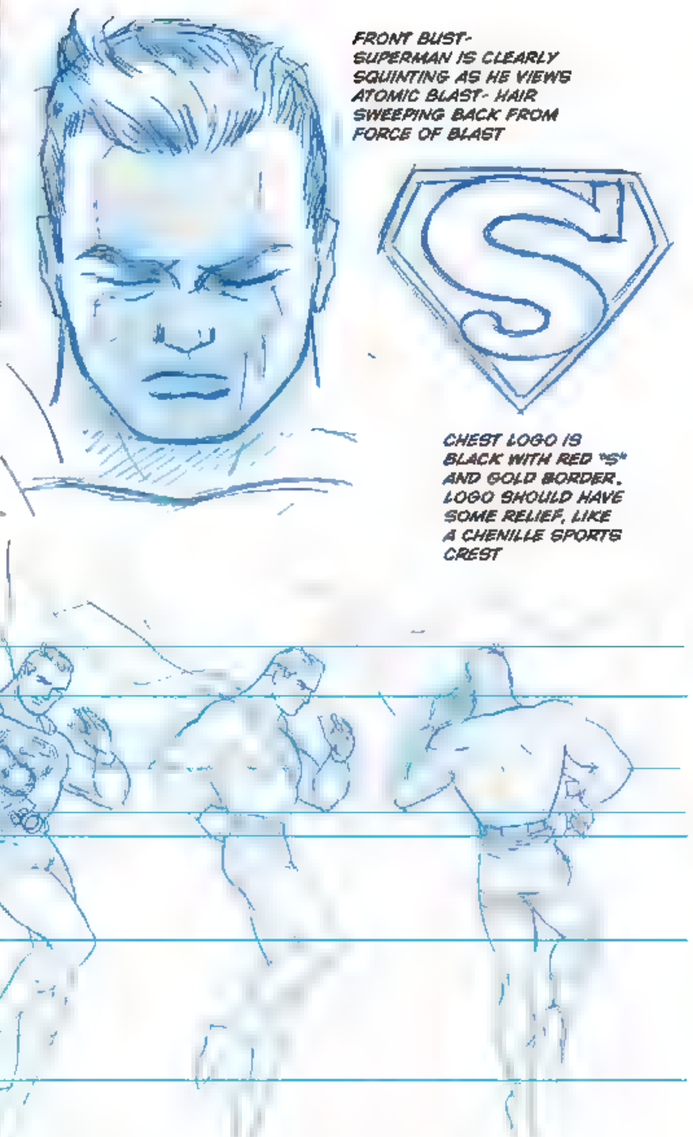
Action Figures

IS A CLASSIC "DICK SPRANG" STYLE DUO IN CLASSIC POSE

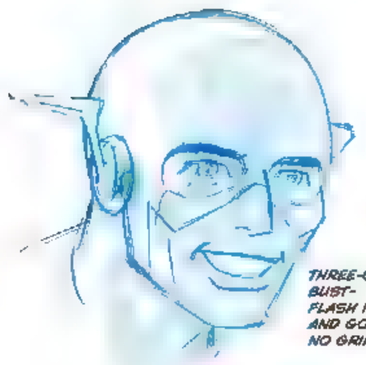


INSPIRATIONAL IMAGE

NOTE: CAMERA TURN TO COME AS SEPARATE DRAWING.



Here's a look at the tremendous line of action figures produced by DC Direct. Kudos go to Jonathan Matthews for his otherworldly ability to bring my flat art to three-dimensional life. Thanks, Jon!

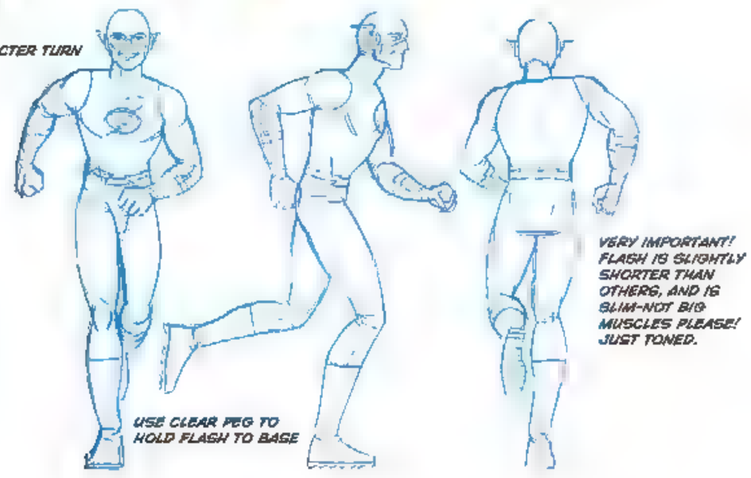


THREE-QUARTER BUST-
FLASH IS OPTIMISTIC AND GOOD NATURED-
NO GRIM 'N GRITTY

RAY PALMER'S BACKPACK FOR FLASH FROM NEW FRONTIER 6
NOTE-LENS IS LIGHT BLUE AND PACK IS SILVER METAL STRAPS ARE OFF-WHITE WEB STRAPS

LOGO AND NACELLE DETAIL IMPORTANT! EAR NACELLES AND ALL UNIFORM TRIM SHOULD BE METALLIC GOLD AS OPPOSED TO YELLOW!

CHARACTER TURN



USE CLEAR PEG TO HOLD FLASH TO BASE

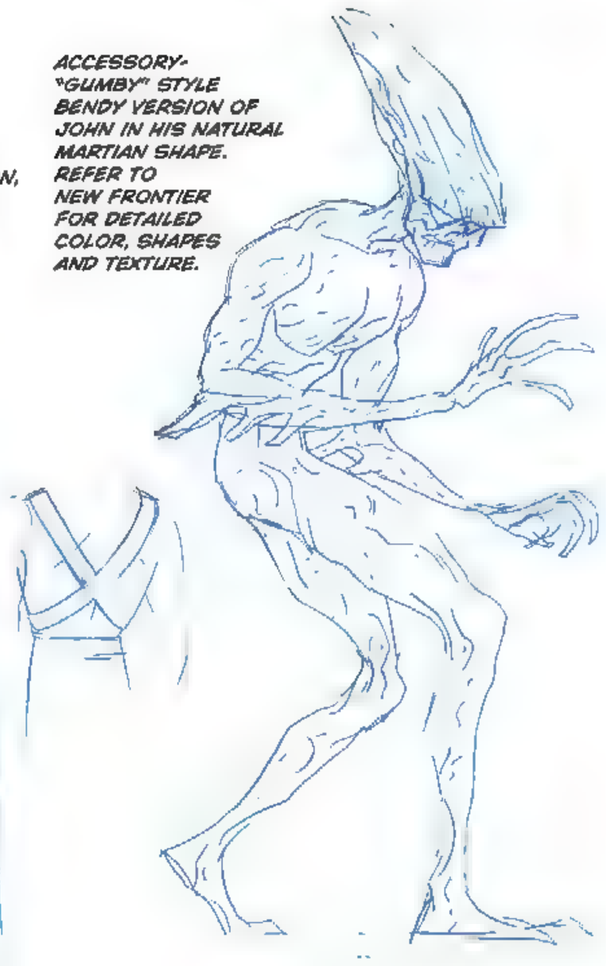
VERY IMPORTANT! FLASH IS SLIGHTLY SHORTER THAN OTHERS, AND IS SLIM-NOT BIG MUSCLES PLEASE! JUST TONED.

CHARACTER BUST:
JOHN SHOULD LOOK OPTIMISTIC, BENEVOLENT. THIS IS STRAIGHT ON, BUT HIS HOME POSE SHOULD CAPTURE THE HEAVENWARD GAZE.
NOTE RE:SKINCOLOR-
JON, PLEASE KNOCK A LITTLE GREY INTO THE GREEN TO NATURALIZE IT A BIT.

CHARACTER TURN

IMPORTANT!
JOHN'S SHORTS ARE SOLID BLACK, NOT BLUE!

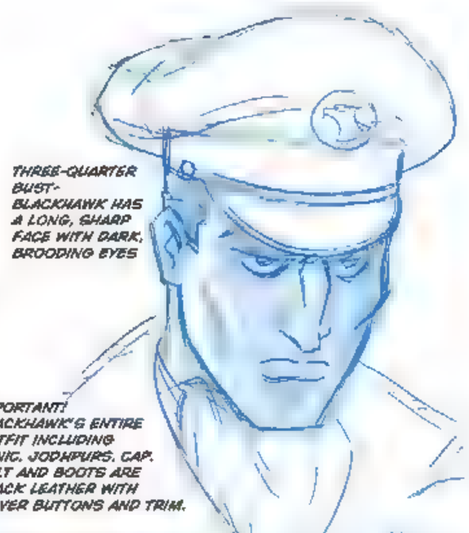
ACCESSORY-
"GUMBY" STYLE BENDY VERSION OF JOHN IN HIS NATURAL MARTIAN SHAPE.
REFER TO NEW FRONTIER FOR DETAILED COLOR, SHAPES AND TEXTURE.



WONDER WOMAN HOME POSE-
FULLY ACCESSORIZED TURN TO COME.

BLACKHAWK LOGO
THIS APPEARS IN COLOR ON CHEST AND AS EMBOSSED SILVER ON FRONT OF CAP.

NOTE: GUN IS DETAILED IN FILENAME: BLACKHAWKMAUSER



THREE-QUARTER BUST-
BLACKHAWK HAS A LONG, SHARP FACE WITH DARK, BROODING EYES

IMPORTANT!
BLACKHAWK'S ENTIRE OUTFIT INCLUDING TUNIC, JODHPURS, CAP, BELT AND BOOTS ARE BLACK LEATHER WITH SILVER BUTTONS AND TRIM.

CHARACTER TURN

ARTICULATION DIAGRAM

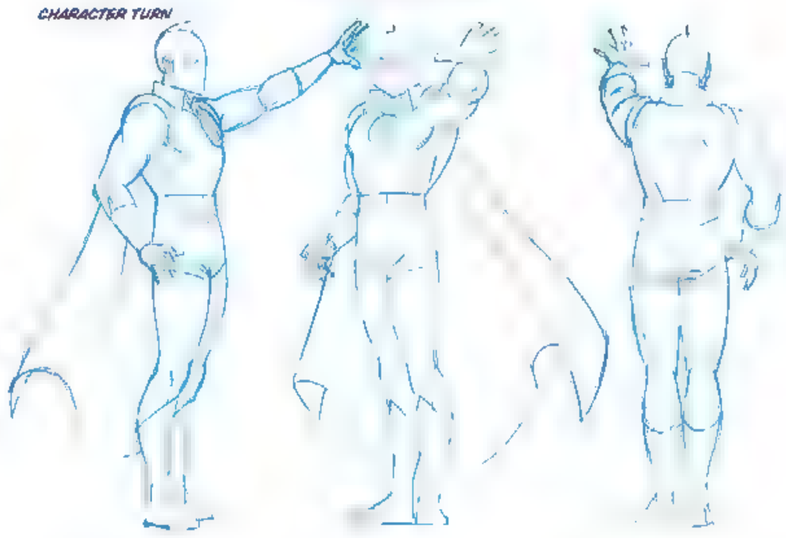
THREE-QUARTER BUST-
DR. FATE MUST HAVE PIERCING EYES-
PLEASE MOLD AS ONE UNIT-IE, HEAD AND HELMET AS ONE,
HELMET NOT REMOVABLE

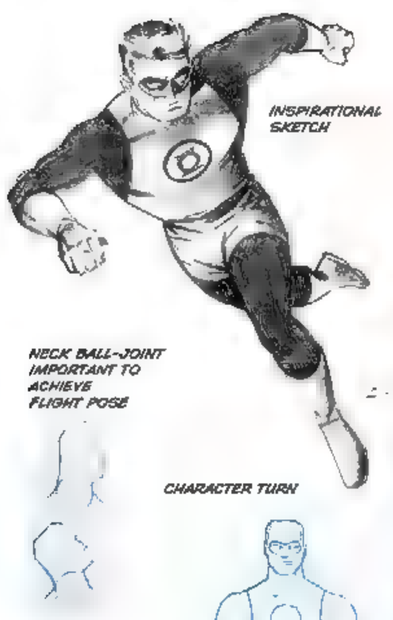
AMULET DETAIL

POSSIBLE ACCESSORY-
SOLID-UNARTICULATED BILLY BATSON FROM NEW FRONTIER 6

IMPORTANT!
PLEASE USE A BURNISHED GOLD FOR ALL UNIFORM ELEMENTS THAT APPEAR YELLOW.

CHARACTER TURN





INSPIRATIONAL SKETCH

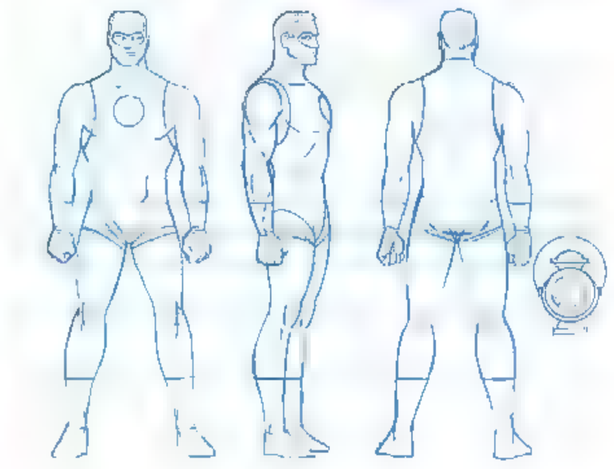
THREE - QUARTER BUST

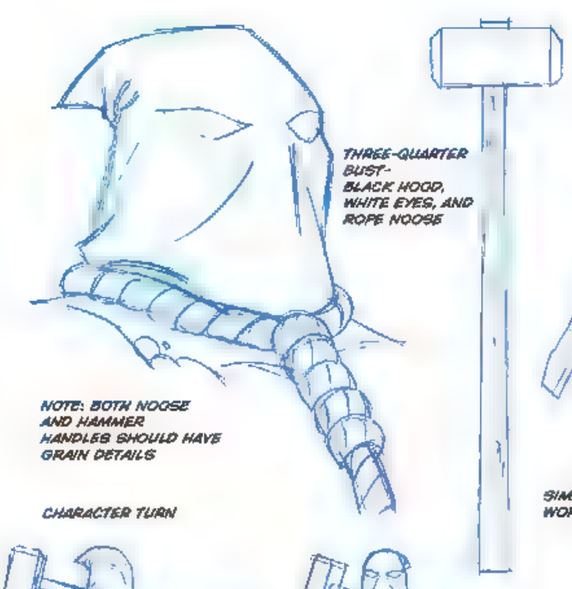
SIMPLE LOGO ON UNIFORM AND RING

NECK BALL-JOINT IMPORTANT TO ACHIEVE FLIGHT POSE

ARTICULATION DIAGRAM

CHARACTER TURN





THREE-QUARTER BUST-
BLACK HOOD, WHITE EYES, AND ROPE NOOSE

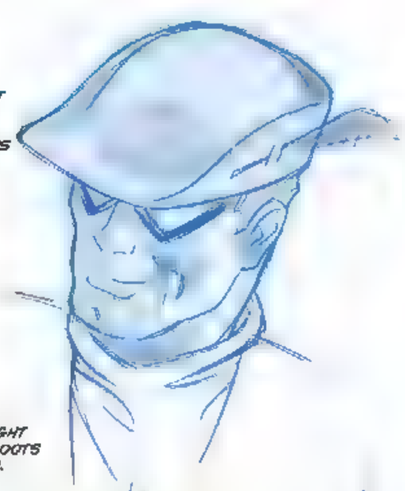
JOHN HENRY'S HAMMERS ARE BLACK METAL WITH WOOD HANDLES

NOTE: BOTH NOOSE AND HAMMER HANDLES SHOULD HAVE GRAIN DETAILS

SIMPLE SUEDE AND LEATHER WORK GLOVES

CHARACTER TURN

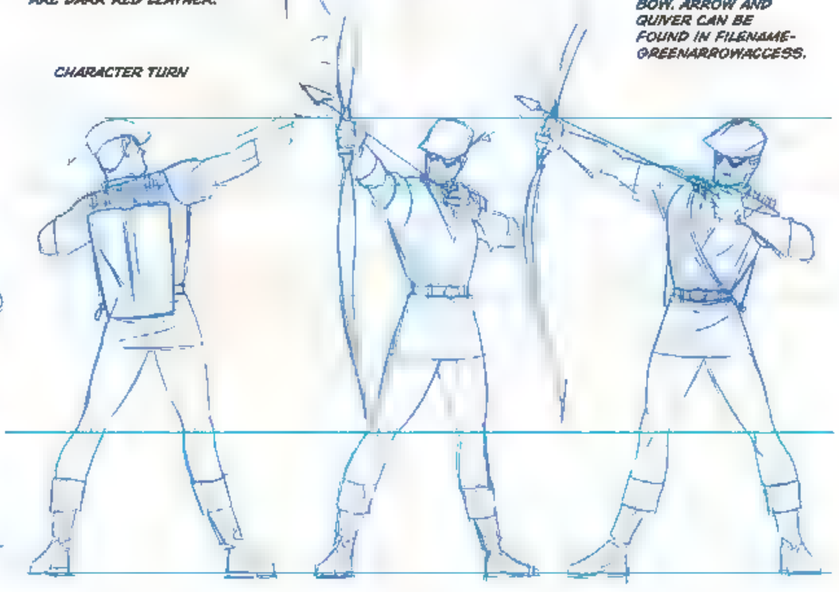
THREE-QUARTER BUST GREEN ARROW IS A DEVIL-MAY-CARE, SWASHBUCKLER- LOTS OF COCKY ATTITUDE-
NOTE CHIN CLEFT.



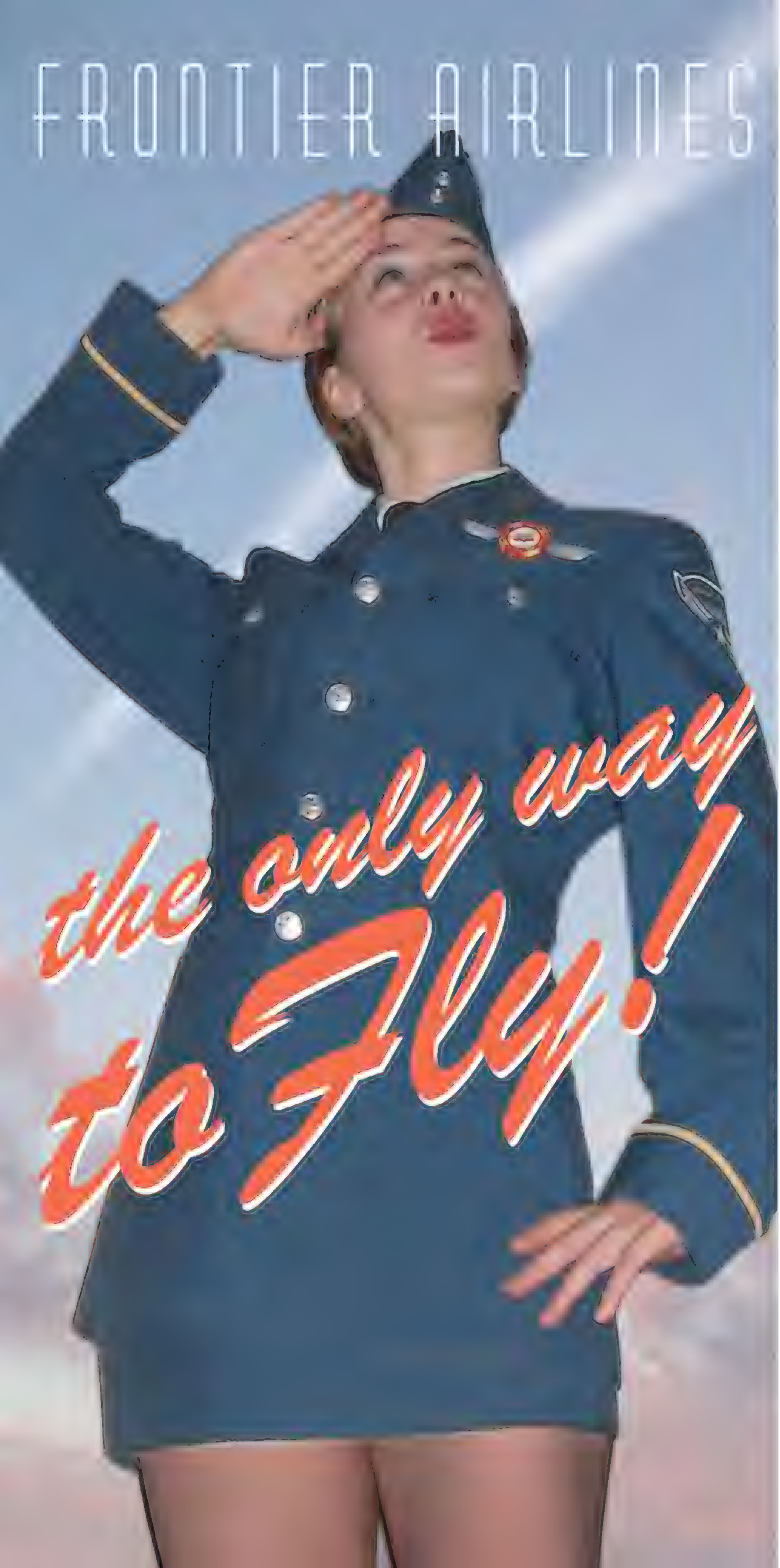
ARTICULATION DIAGRAM

GREEN ARROW'S TUNIC IS MORE SHIRT THAN TIGHT T-SHIRT. GLOVES AND BOOTS ARE DARK RED LEATHER.

CHARACTER TURN



BOW, ARROW AND QUIVER CAN BE FOUND IN FILENAME-
GREENARROWACCESS.



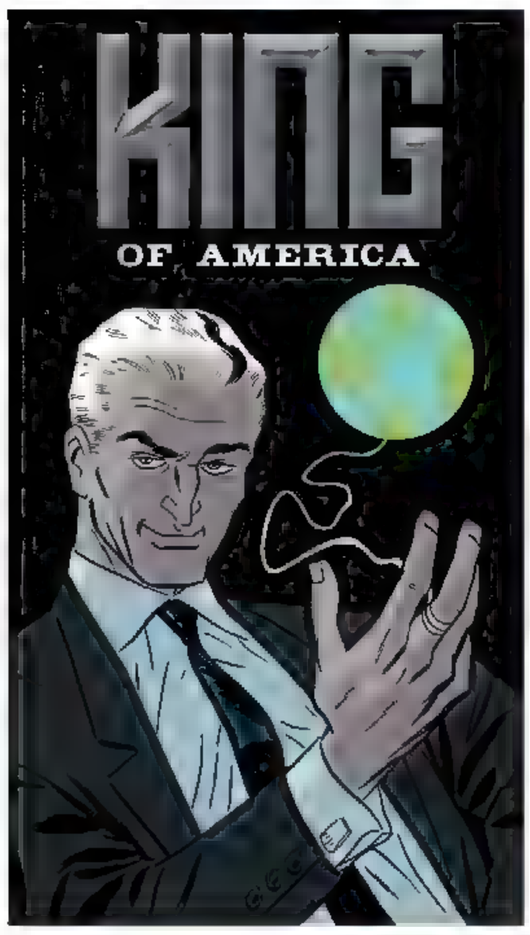
HERE IS JUST A SAMPLING OF SOME OF THE WONDERFUL THINGS AND GREAT TIMES THAT HAVE GROWN OUT OF THE NEW FRONTIER.

Left: The Frontier Airlines poster, featuring my beloved Marsha as the ultimate '50s air cadet. The uniform is an actual Canadian Air Force set with custom insignias and cap.
Below: Cap detail shows the insignia, which was pressed out of clay in an old tin pin from the '50s.

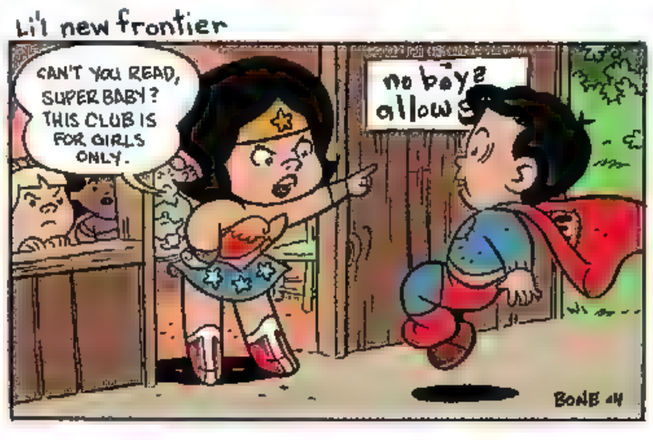
Artwork on opposite page: Several small stories came out of NEW FRONTIER, including "King of America" for SOLO #5 and the Geoff Johns-scripted "Flight" for GREEN LANTERN SECRET FILES. A proposed KING monthly and a BLACK CANARY one-shot with J. Bone were pitched and developed but never made it.
J. Bone often brightens my day with his cartoons, and LI'L NEW FRONTIER is a classic example.

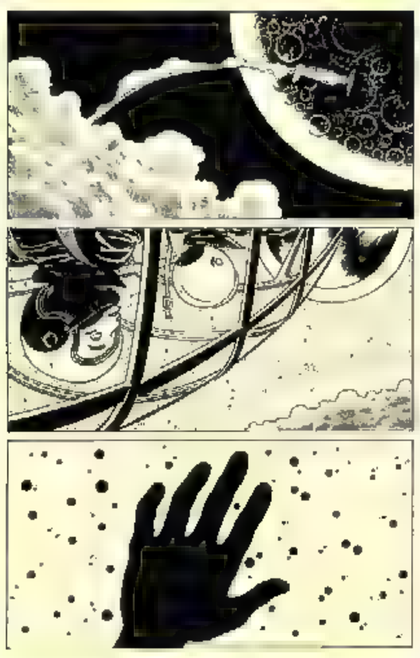
Opposite: THE NEW FRONTIER does the Vegas Retailer Show. My flight crew: Steve Manale, Kathryn Rawson, Laura Rawson and Chris Stone.
Bottom: J. tries out for the crew, Wayne hangs with me and animation director David Bullock, Steve Manale and the New Frontier Casino.

Frontierland

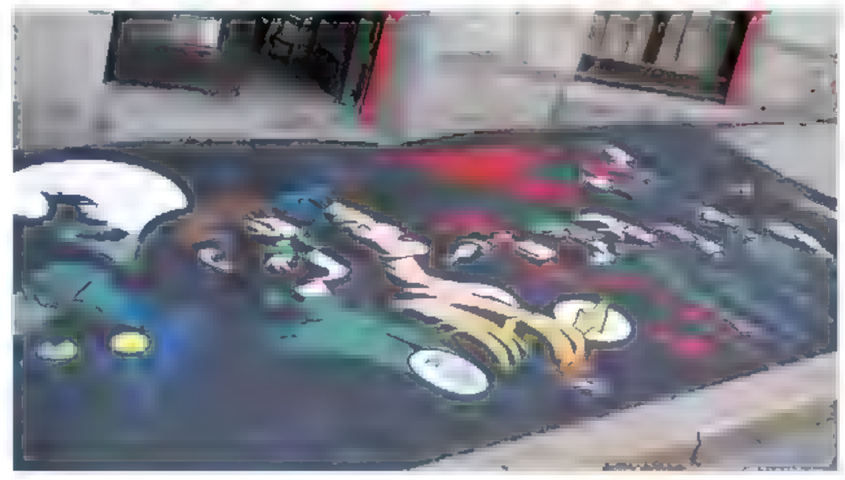


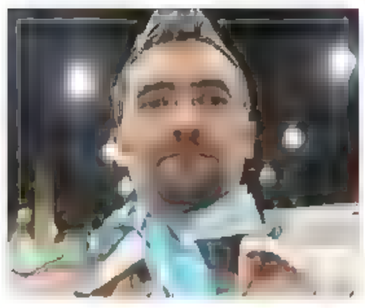
Li'l new frontier



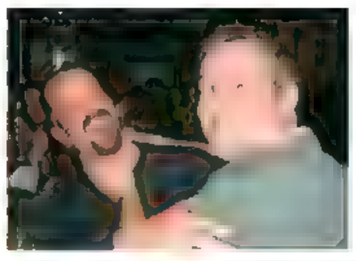


Above: If NEW FRONTIER has an Alpha Fan, it has to be California native Steve Hurley. He presented me with both a custom Ferris cap and a pilot's shirt in San Diego.
Left: Steve went way beyond the call the day he traveled to Edwards Air Force Base and went through several hours of security to meet Chuck Yeager in person. Yeager agreed to sign just one of the many things Steve brought with him, and Steve used that moment to give me one of the greatest gifts I've ever received.





Above: A pre-launch signing at the Halifax shop Strange Adventures included a fab sidewalk mural from NF. Thanks to Cal and everyone at S.A.
Left: The signing, and signing countercard.
Below: Steve McNiven lets me have it.



Afterword

It occurs to me as I attempt to type this obligatory comment on such a large and fresh piece of work that it is probably a little soon for any kind of objective analysis of the work itself.

As a matter of course, I prefer to avoid explaining what a piece like this "means." Depending on your "in" to the story, it could be seen as a love letter to a bygone era or an allegorical reflection of contemporary concerns. Big shoot-'em-up with a giant monster or character-driven historical melodrama. The choice, as always, should belong with the reader.

Whether THE NEW FRONTIER heralds a return to the heroic ideal or is simply a reminder that it existed remains to be seen. I'd like to abandon the rather cramped quarters of industry discussion or literary self-analysis and try to explain the spirit of this book through a quick story.

Dave Thomas was the genial Buffalo television personality who portrayed WKBW's astronaut host of their weekday morning kids' show, *Rocketship 7*. Set in an imaginary rocket ship, the lively 90-minute show featured skits, news, and tips for kids, the obligatory visits from magicians and zookeepers, and glorious uncut Warner Bros. cartoons. On Fridays, *Rocketship 7* had a weekly feature called "Draw Along With the Scope-View."

This was the late sixties, and the world was astro-crazed. *Rocketship 7* did its low-budget best to put across to its young viewers that this was really unfolding on a high-tech space vehicle. Devices like the Scope-View went a long way toward convincing us. The Scope-View was essentially an old-school, wall-mounted blue screen for viewing clips and photos, but on Fridays they would have a fairly talented artist sit behind the screen, and on a very thin piece of paper he would draw a picture with a thick marker. The illusion was perfect. From the front, the Scope-View seemed to be drawing the picture like some futuristic...machine or something!

The challenge was to draw along with the Scope-View and try to do your best. Those Friday mornings I would perch in my chair, pencil at the ready, in a world where anything was possible. A world of magic televisions in space, sunny mornings full of promise, and my drawing.

If you're bracing for speech number 12,367 about how those were better days, relax. It wasn't the times, or the place, or the cultural comforts of the era. It was something you can find anywhere, at any time. It was the earnest faith of youth.

Inevitably, I grew older and one day realized the Scope-View was an elaborate scam. A parlor trick that only a kid would fall for. It didn't cause me to write in to the station and demand more realistic drawing lessons involving more serious themes. I didn't run around trying to tell people that the Scope-View had artistic merit that only a select few were sensitive enough to divine. I simply sought out more detailed and realistic instruction. My youngest brother is several years my junior. When he began to sit in on Fridays, pencil in hand, I felt no need to ridicule the Scope-View or change it to fit my more "adult" taste. I wanted him to take that little scrap of magic forward with him, as I had.

The Scope-View wasn't real. It was an imaginative fiction that was better than real, constructed to help you, in some small way, to develop your own youthful imagination, just like Astronaut Dave was there to help us learn the Golden Rule.

Which brings us around to superheroes. Specifically, the Justice League. The world will always have dark corners, and black and white comes in thousands of shades of gray, but here are seven people, good and true, come what may. They have the power to enslave the world but work tirelessly to keep it free. They don't succumb to envy, greed, or jealousy, and their sense of purpose is driven by an unshakable faith in mankind's basic goodness. They are, in the best sense of the word, childlike. It is the very essence of the term "superhero": An imaginative fiction that is better than real, constructed to help you, in some small way, to develop your own youthful imagination and value system.

I'm 42 now, and I suppose that I believe that the magic of this specific genre is based on the notion that seven powerful people can work together to make the world a better place. That they will do the right thing no matter what the personal cost, no matter how "grim and gritty" the world around them becomes. They are the heroic ideal. That is the spirit driving the characters in THE NEW FRONTIER.

Like my beloved Scope-View, I suppose only a child could buy into such a ridiculous premise.

But once it's in your heart, you can't help but take that little scrap of magic forward with you.

DARWYN COOKE
Toronto, 2005

CLASSI
FIED

Animated Special

When Warner Bros. Animation greenlit their animated adaptation of THE NEW FRONTIER, DC approached me with the idea of creating a one-shot special to coincide with its release.

At that point in time there had been several different scenarios that had almost led me back to the world of THE NEW FRONTIER, but none of them had ever made it onto the page. By the time the *Justice League: The New Frontier* movie began production, I'd made a pretty firm decision that, in terms of comic books, I was going to leave THE NEW FRONTIER to stand alone. I suppose one always fears that going back to something you've already done may diminish the original if you screw it up, but what would eventually become JUSTICE LEAGUE: THE NEW FRONTIER SPECIAL was a little different. It was a simple one-shot, and it would help promote the animated film. I also realized that it might be fun, and it would give me a chance to bring in a few of my friends who had worked on the film.

We came up with three stories that reflected some of the more entertaining aspects of THE NEW FRONTIER: one longer piece and two shorter tales that showcased the work of J. Bone, my longtime collaborator, and David Bullock, the animated film's director. David wanted an inker, and that brought in indie darling Michael Cho, another close friend and a brilliant artist in his own right. A look at production art from the animated film rounded everything out.

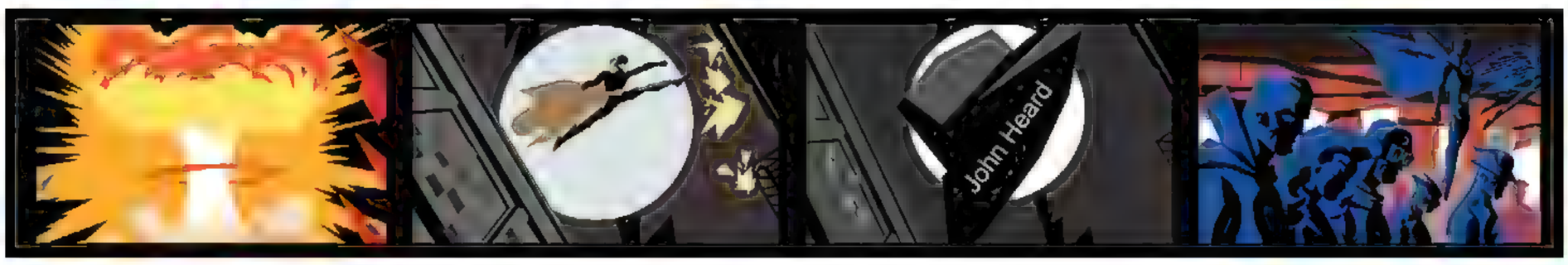
I realized early on that the first story would involve the rivalry between Batman and Superman that is implied in Book One of THE NEW FRONTIER. The Wonder Woman/Black Canary and Robin/Kid Flash stories that followed it were built with their respective artists in mind, which gave me a chance to have a little more fun with the scripts. My thanks to J., David and Michael for classing up the joint.

For "behind the scenes" junkies, the title's real highlight would have to be its closing look at the animation art. Here we get a sense of the magnitude of a project like this, and the immense number of talented artists it takes to pull it off. Allow me to give a well-deserved shout-out here to Paul Rivoche, the genius who did the lead design for the film.

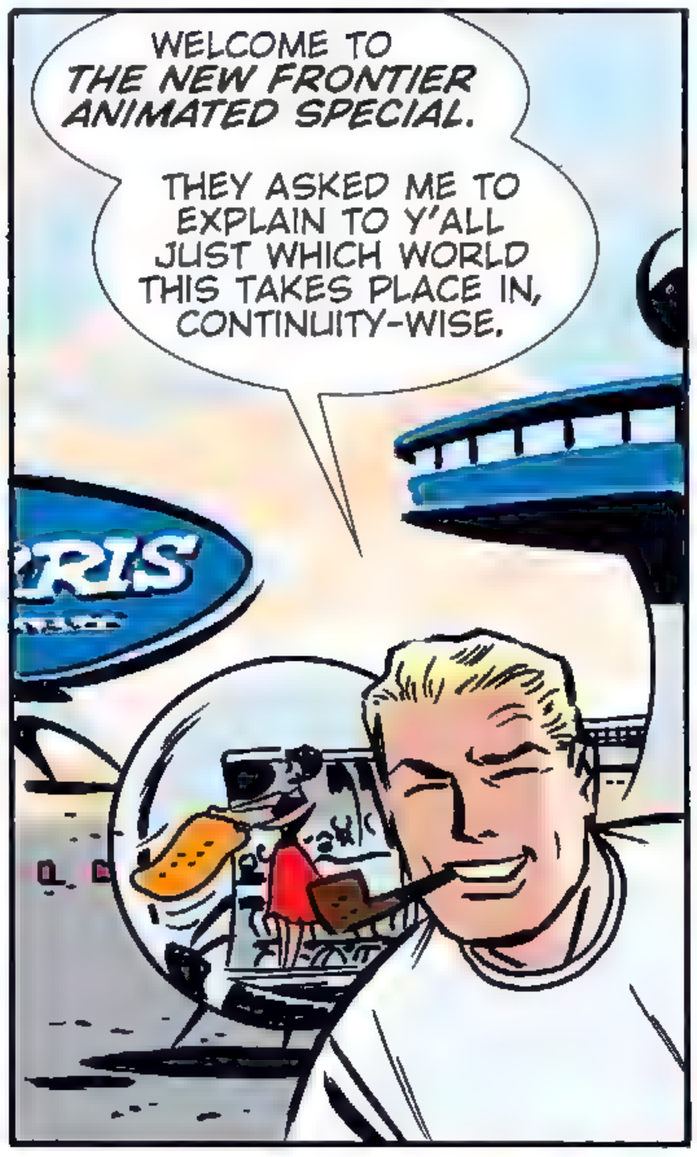
I have, as they say, saved the best for last. In reviewing the special for this introduction, I kept coming back to its opening page featuring Rip Hunter explaining comic book continuity. For me, this is the book's real gem, and its message is even more timely now than it was seven years ago.

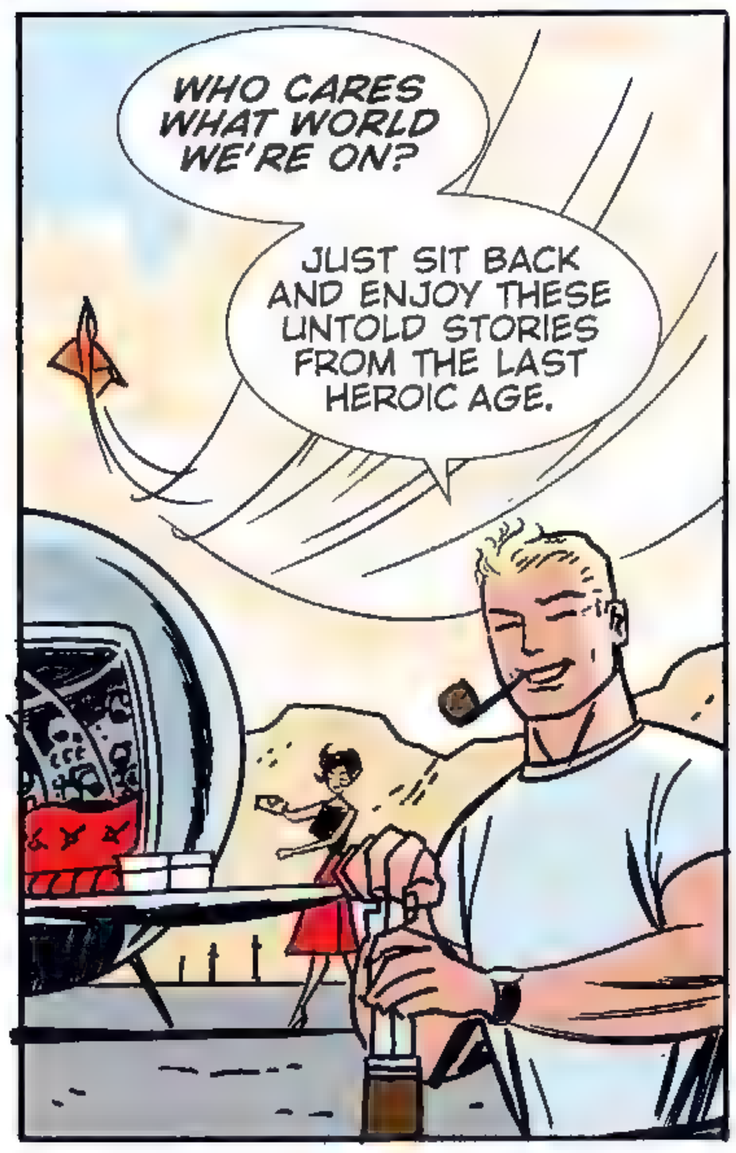
Enjoy.

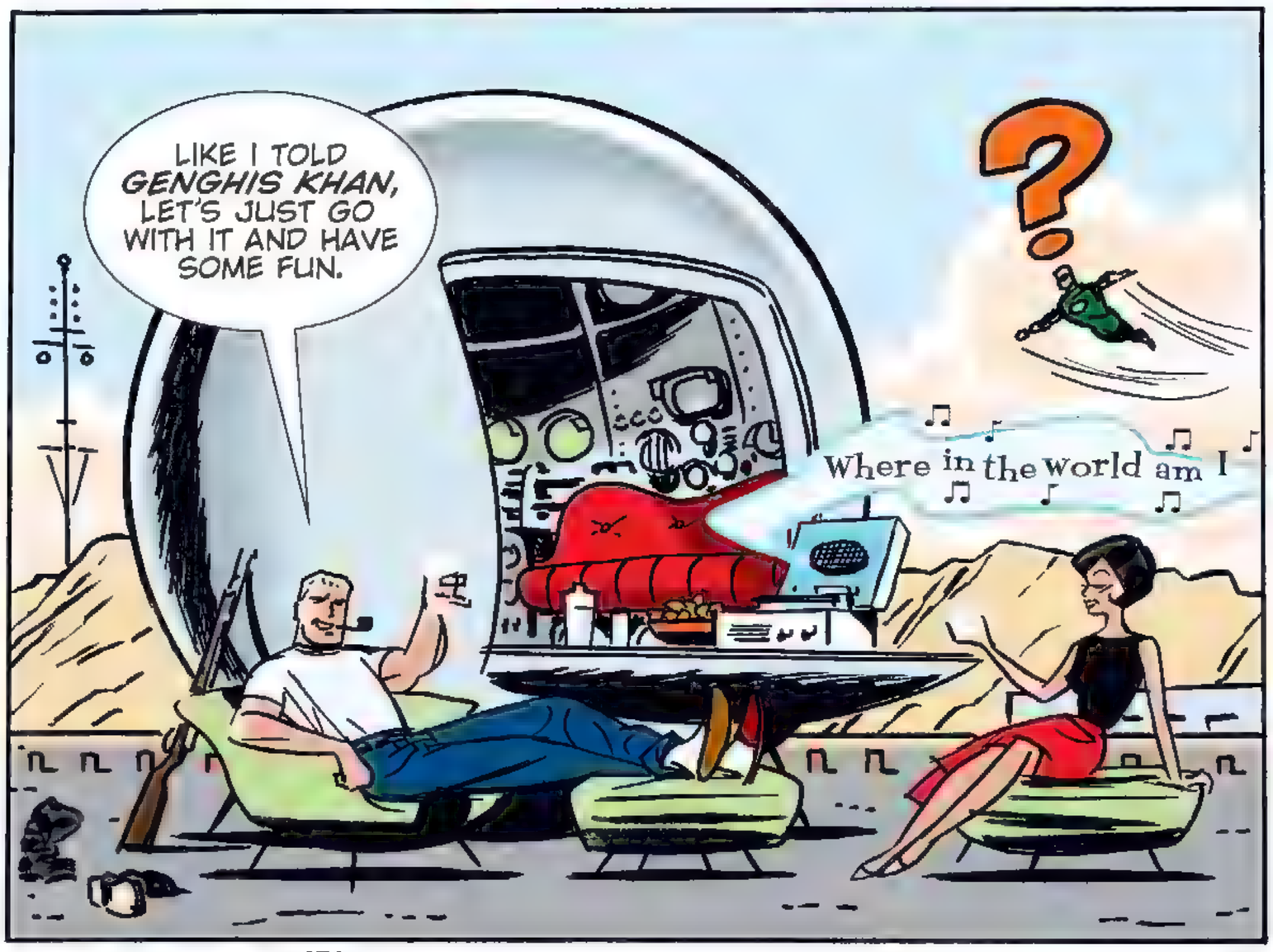
DARWYN COOKE
East of Ferris Aircraft, 2014



INTRODUCTION by Rip Hunter







JUSTICE LEAGUE
The New Frontier

REVEALED AT LAST!
UNTOLD STORIES FROM
THE NEW FRONTIER

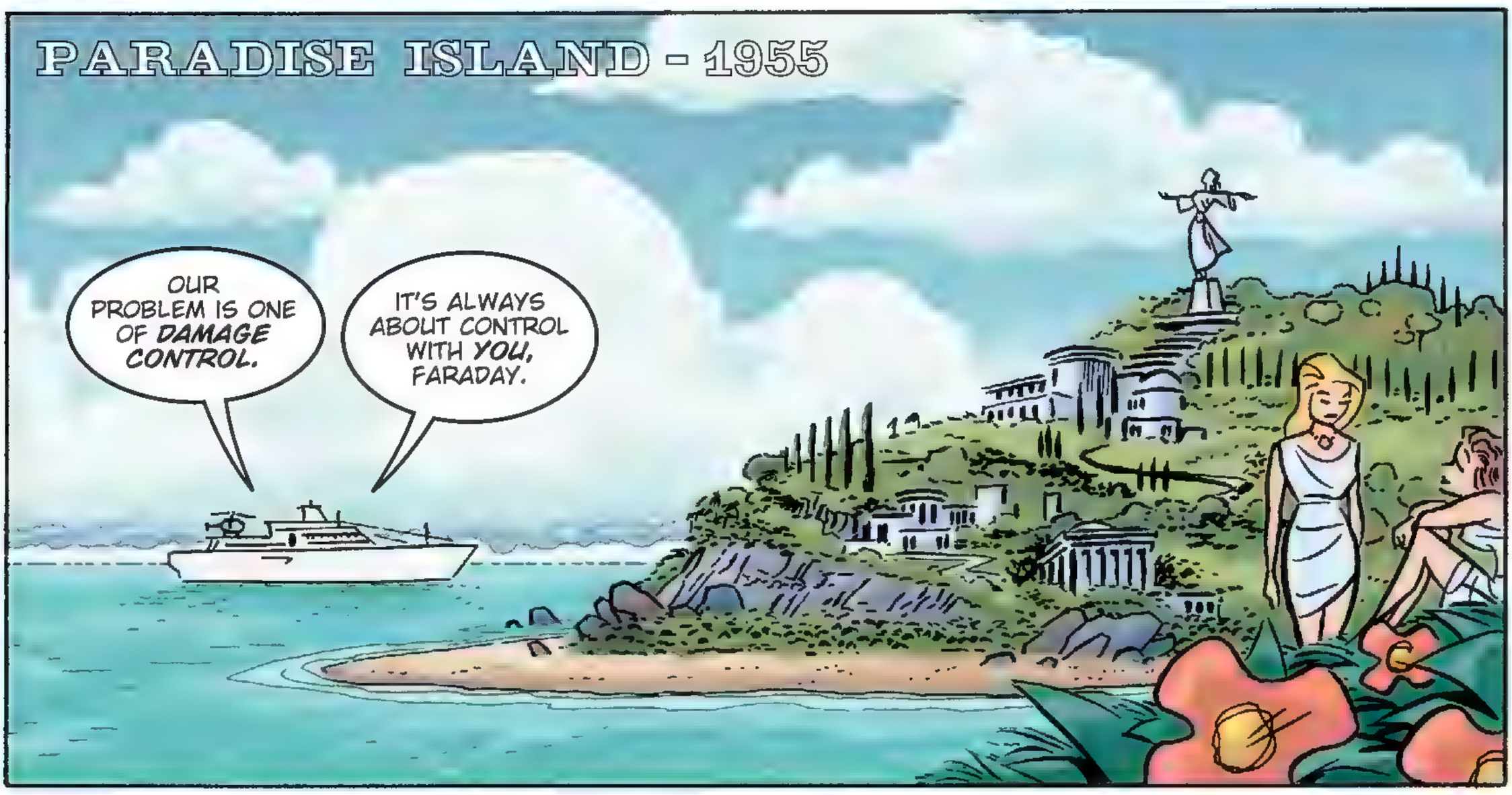
SUPERMAN & BATMAN
IN A FIGHT TO THE FINISH!
473

ROBIN & KID FLASH
CRASH A DRAGSTRIP RIOT!
497

WONDER WOMAN
& BLACK CANARY
FIGHT THE GENDER WAR!
505

511 THE MAKING OF THE ANIMATED FILM
BEHIND THE SCENES, STORYBOARDS AND EXCLUSIVE ARTWORK FROM JLNF

CHAPTER X
THE GREATER GOOD



LAST WEEK WE MOVED ON THE BAT-MAN. WE FEEL HE'S THE CHAMPION OF THE OUTLAWS, AND IF WE BRING *HIM* IN, THE OTHERS WILL COME QUIETLY.

DESPITE OVER-WHELMING NUMBERS *AND* WEAPONS, HE MANAGED TO EVADE CAPTURE. NO LIVES LOST, BUT SEVERAL HUNDRED THOUSAND IN PROPERTY DAMAGE.

SO THAT WAS THAT. IKE PUT THE BRAKES ON THE WHOLE PROGRAM.

IKE DID AGREE TO ONE OPTION. THE TWO OF YOU.

IN AND OUT, QUIET AND QUICK. LIKE INDOCHINA WAS *SUPPOSED* TO BE.

EEEEEERRRRKKK

I WANT NO PART OF THIS.

I AGREED TO THIS MEETING BECAUSE I THOUGHT YOU HAD SOMETHING IMPORTANT TO DISCUSS.

I SEE NOW IT'S SIMPLY MORE OF YOUR GAMES OF FEAR AND CONTROL.

IT ISN'T THAT CUT AND DRIED, DIANA. THERE'S A GREATER GOOD TO CONSIDER.

I AGREE, KAL. THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT I'M CONSIDERING.

YOU'RE ASKING ME TO HUNT DOWN AN HONORABLE MAN IN THE NAME OF FREEDOM AND SECURITY. I SEE NO GOOD COMING OUT OF THIS.

GOOD DAY, GENTLEMEN.

PLEASE EXTEND MY WARMEST REGARDS TO GENERAL EISENHOWER.

OH, AND *KAL.* I'D TAKE ANOTHER LOOK AT THOSE FILMS.

YOU'D BETTER HOPE THAT THE GREATER GOOD IS WORTH KILLING FOR. THERE'S NO WAY IN HEAVEN YOU CAN BRING *THAT* MAN IN ALIVE.

WE'RE LEAVING.

YES, PRINCESS.

AH, MR. WAYNE. MY THANKS FOR ALLOWING US TO HOLD OUR SUMMIT ABOARD YOUR SHIP.

IT WAS AN HONOR, *PRINCESS.*

I SHARE YOUR AVERSION TO WALKING INTO A LION'S DEN. I'M *GRATIFIED* MY SHIP COULD AFFORD YOU NEUTRAL TERRITORY.

NEUTRALITY IS AN ILLUSION, MR. WAYNE, AS I'M CERTAIN GOTHAM CITY WILL SOON REALIZE. FAREWELL, SIR.

MOUNT RUSHMORE

SIR.

EVENING, SON.

WE HAVE A VISUAL ON BISHOP SIX.

THANK YOU FOR SEEING ME, SIR. I REALIZE FARADAY SPEAKS *FOR* YOU, BUT I'M HAVING RESERVATIONS ABOUT THIS OPERATION.

I'M NOT SURPRISED.

YOU FEEL SOME MORAL AFFINITY TO THIS VIGILANTE, DESPITE THE FACT THAT HE'S A FEDERAL CRIMINAL. *TRUE?*

YES SIR. HE ACTS OUTSIDE THE LAW, BUT ALL THE EVIDENCE SHOWS HIM AS A FORCE FOR GOOD.

YOUR EMPATHY IS *ADMIRABLE.*

IT'S A QUALITY SHARED BY ALL OUR GREAT LEADERS. BUT AS LEADERS, THEY KNEW TO PUT ASIDE THOSE FEELINGS IF THEY RAN COUNTER TO THE *GREATER* GOOD.

Darwyn

I SUPPOSE THAT'S MY PROBLEM. IS THIS ***REALLY*** NECESSARY FOR THE GREATER GOOD?

THIS MAN SEEMS TO BE DOING THE PEOPLE OF GOTHAM CITY A ***GREAT DEAL*** OF GOOD.

SON, ***SON***-- A ***CITY*** DOES NOT A ***NATION*** MAKE.

THIS REPUBLIC WAS BUILT BY MEN WITH THE ***PURPOSE*** AND ***CLARITY*** TO SEE PAST THE IMMEDIATE COMFORT OF THE FEW.

I SIMPLY CAN'T HAVE AN OUTLAW RUNNING LOOSE IN DIRECT VIOLATION OF A LAW I IMPLEMENTED. IF IT HELPS, YOU CAN CONSIDER IT A PRESIDENTIAL ORDER.

VERY WELL, SIR. I'LL BRING HIM IN ON MY OWN.

WONDERFUL.

NOW TELL ME, HOW ***ARE*** THOSE FOLKS OF YOURS? MARTHA'S BACK STILL ACTING UP?

LEXCO INDUSTRIES, METROPOLIS

I SAID I'VE BEEN *BURGLED*, YOU IDIOT.

YES, *THE STONE*. HAVE EVERY SECURITY OFFICER ON OUR PAYROLL BROUGHT TO ME. LOCK DOWN THE BUILDING AND SEARCH OFFICE TO OFFICE.

FIND THAT STONE OR YOU'RE A DEAD MAN.

GOTHAM CITY

WHY?

LET'S JUST SAY I HEARD YOU'VE GOT A *PROBLEM* COMING TO TOWN, AND I THOUGHT THIS MIGHT HELP SOLVE IT.

IT MIGHT SOUND FUNNY COMING FROM ME, BUT GOTHAM NEEDS YOU.

THANK YOU, SELINA.

DON'T GET ALL WEEPY ON ME. THAT TRINKET IS NO GIFT. YOU OWE ME SEVENTY THOUSAND *AND* DINNER AT THE STRAND.

GOOD LUCK, BRUCE.

Darwyn

THE PLAN WAS TO TARGET HIS KNOWN PATROL AREAS, BUT HE'S READY FOR ME, HIS INVITATION ***WRIT BOLD*** ACROSS THE SKY.

HOW IN ***HEAVEN*** DID HE KNOW? THE DATE FOR THIS OPERATION WAS ***STRICTLY*** CLASSIFIED. AND WHY AM I SO TENSE? WHEN YOU BOIL IT ALL DOWN, THIS BAT MAN IS JUST A CITIZEN WITH A CAPE AND SOME GAS PELLETS.

A JUNKYARD. VERY CLEVER. ALL THE LEAD PAINT IN THE WRECKS MAKE MY X-RAYS NEXT TO USELESS. AT LEAST WE'RE OUTSIDE THE POPULATED AREAS.

IS THAT A ***NOTE?*** IT'S TRUE WHAT THEY SAY ABOUT ***GOTHAM.***

EVERYONE GETS CUTE WITH YOU HERE.

YOU'VE GOT TO BE KIDDING ME.

VVVRRRRRR

Think fast.

Darwyn

HE'S PROBABLY WONDERING WHO'S CRAZY ENOUGH TO COME AT HIM IN A CAR.

IT'S ALL ABOUT SPEED AND TIMING FROM HERE ON IN. I FIRE TO HIS RIGHT.

I'M *COUNTING* ON HIS REACTION. HE EASILY DODGES THE MISSILE, BUT DRIFTS INTO THE REAL BOGEY.

THIS IS SOME TRULY *HORRIFIC* ORDNANCE. AN EXPANDING STYRENE FOAM SO FULL OF TOXIC JUNK EVEN THE ARMY SHELVED IT.

MAYBE HE'LL CHOKE ON IT.

Darwyn

THANK YOU, ARMY SURPLUS.

WHUMP

I WASTE A BIT OF RUBBER ON HIM AND GET CLEAR JUST AS THE MISSILE DETONATES.

NOW I STEP ON IT. THAT MESS ***WON'T*** HOLD HIM LONG...

...EVEN WITH SIXTY TONS OF DETROIT METAL ON TOP OF HIM.

IT'S A STRAIGHT RUN TO THE HILLS NOW.

I HAD THIS SLED BUILT LAST YEAR BUT IT WAS ***TOO MUCH*** CAR, EVEN FOR ME. HIGH-SPEED TESTS SHOWED AN ANNOYING TENDENCY TO ROLL AND EXPLODE INTO A FIERY COFFIN. BUT ***TODAY...***

...TODAY MY FOOT IS ON THE FLOOR. THE NEEDLE IS ***BURIED.***

HE'S FREE.

IT TOOK OVER A HUNDRED THOUSAND DOLLARS' WORTH OF GEAR TO HOLD HIM FOR ***EXACTLY*** FIVE SECONDS.

HE'S ON ME IN A HEARTBEAT. BARELY HAVE TIME TO ROTATE THE SLICK VENTS AND PRIME THE BOOSTER.

THE OIL AND ROCKET BOOSTER DO THEIR JOB. NOW COMES THE PURE RUGGED.

SCHLAAACK

BOOM

THE BOOSTER BUYS ME THE SPEED I NEED, BUT IT'S A SOLID FUEL ROCKET. THERE'S ***NO OFF SWITCH.*** I HAVE TO TURN THIS DEATHTRAP WHILE IT'S ACCELERATING.

MISTER AMERICA ATTACKS THE HILL WITH HIS FACE. I RIFLE INTO THE CAVE, HOPING FOR A NICE SOFT WALL TO CRASH INTO.

HE HAS GOT TO BE GETTING TIRED OF THIS.

ALFRED.

HERE, SIR. HE'S JUST ENTERED THE CAVE. HE'S MOVING SLOWLY.

IF I MAY, SIR, THAT WAS AN ***EXEMPLARY*** BIT OF PARKING.

ROGER THAT. LET'S STAY FOCUSED.

RADIO SILENCE FROM HERE ON IN. SERVE THE TEA WHILE I CUT THE RUG.

THIS FREAK CAN HEAR A FLY SCRATCH ITS ASS SO IT'S ***CODE*** ALL THE WAY. THE "RUG" IS BASICALLY A HARPOON WITH A MOTORCYCLE ATTACHED. "TEA TIME" IS CODE FOR THE AUDIO PART OF OUR PROGRAM.

PART ONE IS SIMPLE ENOUGH. HI-FI RECORDINGS OF REVVING MOTORBIKES FROM DOZENS OF LOCATIONS. BETWEEN THAT ***AND*** THE LEAD SPRAY ON THE WALLS, MY APPROACH IS COVERED.

THEN ALFRED HITS HIM WITH THE SONICS. DOESN'T MAKE HIM ANY WEAKER, BUT PLAYS HELL WITH THE INNER EAR.

AND IT MAKES THE BATS WICKED CRAZY.

I RIDE THE CLOUD OF BATS IN AND HIT THE LIGHT. I NEED HIS ATTENTION FOR THIS NEXT BIT.

TIME TO SEE WHAT HE THINKS OF SELINA'S PRESENT.

PAM

I SEE THE MADMAN FIRING SOME SORT OF WEAPON AT ME BUT THE SOUNDWAVE HAS JUKED MY BALANCE.

I--I'M HIT?!

SWEET LORD, MY SHOULDER IS *ON FIRE.* FAMILIAR MESSAGES SHOOT OVER MY NERVOUS SYSTEM.

KRYPTONITE. I FEEL MY ENERGY GUTTERING LIKE A CANDLE AND CAN'T HELP BUT WONDER...

...WHO'S THE HUNTER HERE?

I'VE GOT TO SNAP OUT OF IT. THIS COULD END UP KILLING ME.

THEN I SEE THE CAGE HE'S BUILT FOR ME.

FOR THE FIRST TIME IN YEARS, THE THOUGHT OF DEFEAT IS REAL. IN DESPERATION, I CLAW AT THE ROCK WITH NUMB FINGERS.

I CAN'T LET THIS... *HUMAN* BEAT ME.

I'D RATHER DIE.

SPLOB

AARRRGH!

SKAAAASH

I DON'T KNOW HOW LONG I'M OUT.

GET UP.

I SAID GET UP YOU MOTHERLESS ALIEN!

KRACK

MOTHERLESS?

MOTHERLESS? IF I WAS ANY LESS A MAN, *I SWEAR--*

HUURK--

GO AHEAD, TOUGH GUY... *DO IT.*

THAT'S ENOUGH!

GREAT HERA, ***LOOK AT YOU.*** READY TO KILL OR DIE OVER SOMETHING NEITHER OF YOU WANT.

BOTH OF YOU ARE BETTER THAN THIS.

KAL, WHEN ARE YOU GOING TO STOP TAKING ORDERS AND LEARN TO FOLLOW YOUR HEART?

AND YOU, MY FRIEND. THEY SEND HIM TO CATCH YOU, AND YOU RESPOND BY BUILDING A CAGE OF YOUR OWN.

THERE MUST BE GREAT TRAGEDY BEHIND SUCH DARKNESS.

DON'T YOU SEE? THE THREE OF US ARE ***ALL THAT'S LEFT.*** THEY WANT US TO TURN AGAINST EACH OTHER.

IT'S UP TO US TO BAND TOGETHER IN THE NAME OF FREEDOM.

AND WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO TELL FARADAY? ***THE PRESIDENT?*** HAVE YOU CONSIDERED THAT, DIANA?

I HAVE A PLAN TO DEAL WITH THAT.

YOU'RE ASKING ME TO TRUST A MAN WITH LEAD PLATES IN HIS COWL TO HIDE BEHIND?

FOR GOD'S SAKE, HE TRIED TO KILL ME NOT FIVE MINUTES AGO.

YOU MAKE A GOOD POINT.

PERHAPS THIS WILL HELP.

BRUCE WAYNE?

I'LL BE DAMNED!

ALL THAT TIME ON YOUR SHIP--

NO HARD FEELINGS.

BRAVO, WAYNE. PATTON HIMSELF COULDN'T HAVE DONE BETTER.

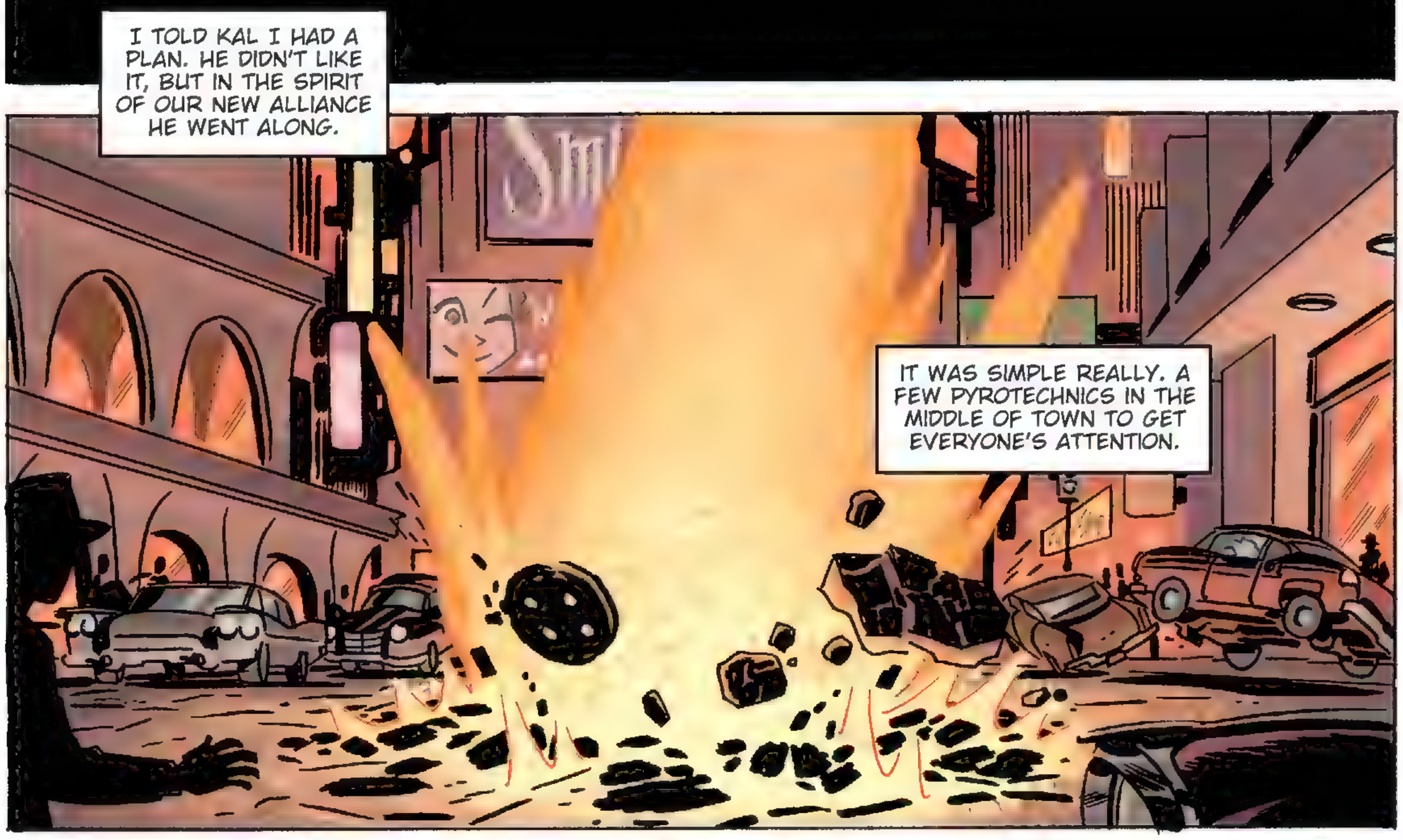
TO FREEDOM.

FOR AN AMAZON, THERE IS NO GREATER DEED THAN OVERCOMING ANGER AND CONFLICT WITH *LOVE.*

TO BRING THESE TWO GREAT MEN TOGETHER HAS BUOYED MY SPIRIT.

Darwyn

EPILOGUE


I TOLD KAL I HAD A PLAN. HE DIDN'T LIKE IT, BUT IN THE SPIRIT OF OUR NEW ALLIANCE HE WENT ALONG.
IT WAS SIMPLE REALLY. A FEW PYROTECHNICS IN THE MIDDLE OF TOWN TO GET EVERYONE'S ATTENTION.
ONCE THEY WERE SURE THEY HAD A CITY FULL OF WITNESSES, THEY FAKED A BATTLE AND KAL *PRETENDED* TO BE DEFEATED BY WHAT AMOUNTED TO A COLORFUL SMOKE BOMB.

NEWS OF THIS MONUMENTAL EVENT TRAVELED FAST, AND IN ITS WAKE OUR LIVES STOOD CHANGED FOREVER.

MY ALLIANCE TO THESE TWO MEN WILL MAKE IT IMPOSSIBLE FOR ME TO CONTINUE TO REMAIN DETACHED FROM THE WAR WITHIN AMERICA.

BRUCE WAYNE UNMASKED IN FRONT OF US. TOGETHER I FEEL WE'VE HELPED THIS TORMENTED MAN TAKE A STRONG STEP BACK FROM THE ABYSS.

HE HAS RISKED EXPOSURE AND SHAME FOR HIS ENTIRE BLOODLINE WITH THIS ACT OF FAITH. I PLEDGE THAT HE NEVER FIND REASON TO REGRET THAT TRUST.

The Gotham Times

MAN VS SUPERMAN

Gotham's Dark Knight defeats Man of Steel in dou

I FEAR IT IS MY KAL WHO HAS GIVEN THE MOST. IT MUST BE HUMBLING TO HAVE TO FEIGN DEFEAT. HIS STRENGTH OF CHARACTER IS PROOF OF SOMETHING I'VE KNOWN IN MY HEART ALL ALONG.

HE WAS SENT TO US FOR A REASON. HE IS OUR SAVIOR.

THE DAILY PLANET

MORNING EDITION

NOT SO SUPER?

WHEN THE TIME COMES WE WILL STAND AND BE COUNTED ***TOGETHER.***

FOR AMERICA. FOR ***THE WORLD.***

FOR THE GREATER GOOD.

SCRIPT **DARWYN COOKE** ART

DAVE STEWART COLOR **JARED FLETCHER** LETTERING

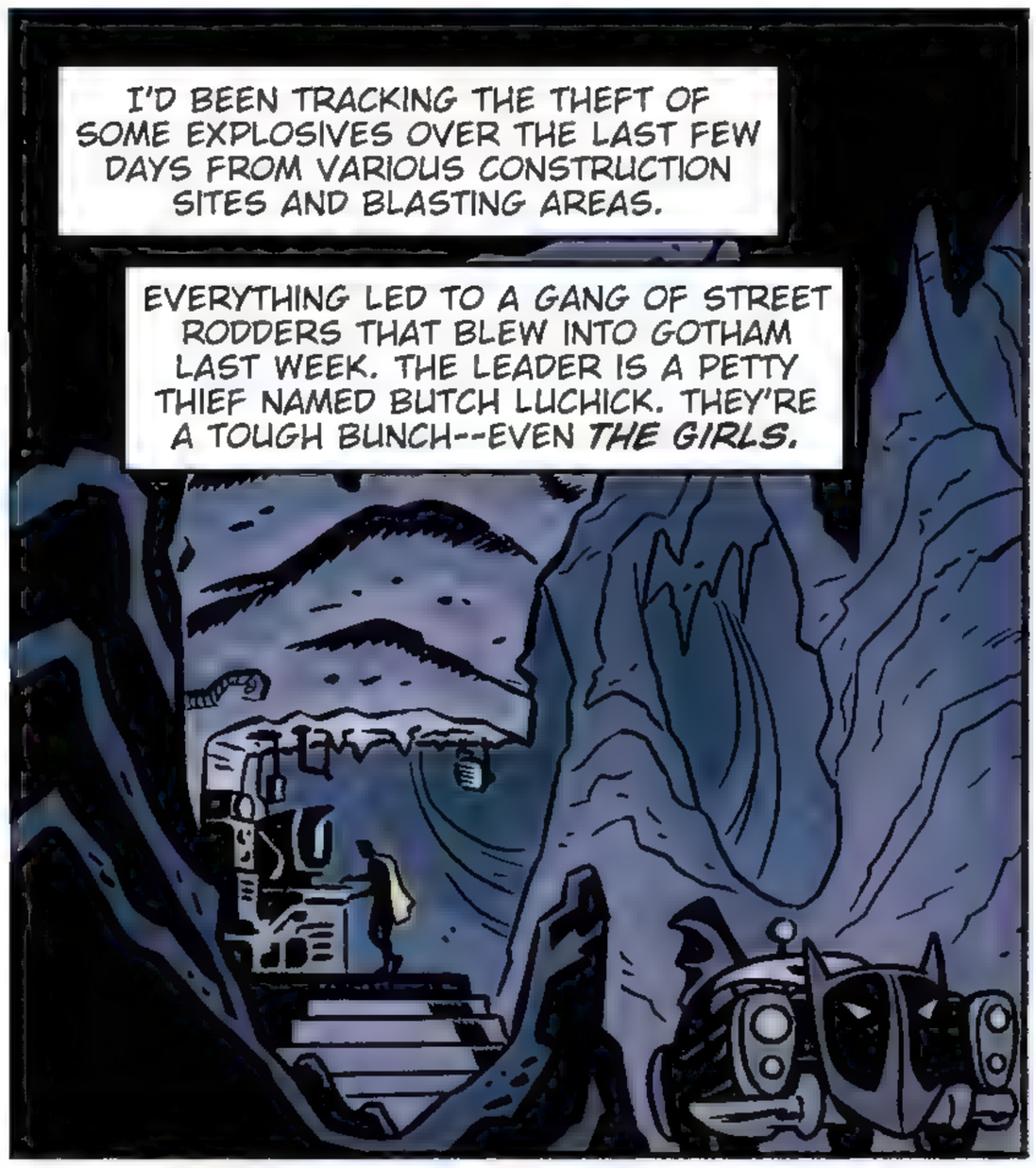
IAN SATTLER ASSOCIATE EDITOR DAN DiDIO EDITOR

"DRAGSTRIP RIOT"

STARRING

ROBIN
-THE BOY WONDER-

Script: Darwyn Cooke
Pencils: David Bullock
Inks: Michael Cho
Color: Dave Stewart
Lettering: Jared Fletcher
Associate Editor: Ian Sattler
Editor: Dan DiDio



SO I MAKE THE SCENE IN A SLED I COPPED OUT OF THE BOSS MAN'S GARAGE.

THE RIDE IS TUFF, SO I GET SOME RESPECT. I'M HERE FOR INFORMATION, BUT BEFORE LONG, THEY'VE GOT ME RACING SOME ***LOUDMOUTH*** NAMED WALLY WOOD.

I'M GONNA ***SHUT YOU DOWN,*** CORVETTE BOY!

A CHICK NAMED CRYSTAL FLAGS US. WHAT A ***BABE.***

DID YOU FIX HIM, BUTCH?

NO SWEAT. THAT SNOOP WALLY WOOD IS ABOUT TO HAVE SOME ***SERIOUS*** CAR TROUBLE.

I TAKE HIM OFF THE LINE, BUT MY SMALL BLOCK IS GEARED TOO HIGH FOR THE LONG RUN. HIS CRATE COMES ON FAST, WITH MONSTER TOP END.

IS THAT ALL YOU'VE GOT, DOBIE?

SEE YOU AT THE FINISH LINE, JER--

BANG!

HOLY CROW!

INSTINCT KICKS IN. THAT WAS NO ***BLOWOUT.*** WALLY'S CAR WAS ***SABOTAGED*** AND HE'S ABOUT TO RIDE THAT CLIFF TO PANCAKE CITY.

I HATE TO BLOW MY COVER, BUT I CAN'T LET THIS HAPPEN.

ALL RIGHT, BIG MOUTH, GIVE ME YOUR HAN--

?

TIME TO BLOW THIS POP STAND, KIDS.

BUTCH, WE *CAN'T* JUST LEAVE! THEY COULD BE HURT!

THAT KID *LITERALLY* VANISHED. I JUMP CLEAR AS HIS HEAP MAKES LIKE A CHINESE FIRECRACKER.

BOOOOM

LET'S BLOW, ADAM. THIS TRAMP WOULD RATHER STAY AND WORRY ABOUT THOSE ZEROES.

AHH! YOU CREEP!

WHOA. THAT WAS *CLOSE.*

OH MY GOD THAT WAS SO BRAVE, WHAT YOU DID.

IS WALLY... DEAD?

HE WASN'T IN THE CAR. PROB'LY THROWN CLEAR.

HE MUST HAVE RUN OFF.

CRYSTAL, I THINK BUTCH RIGGED THIS WHOLE THING.

DO YOU KNOW WHERE I CAN FIND HIM?

THAT *RAT.* HE WANTED ME TO MEET HIM LATER AT THE OLD KZZX RADIO TRANSMITTER. HE PROMISED THERE'D BE SOME REAL FIREWORKS AT MIDNIGHT.

OH *GREAT.* THE COPS!

TAKE MY HEAP AND SPLIT. MEET ME BACK HERE IN THE MORNING.

IT'S TIME TO DROP THE UNDERCOVER THING AND GET TO WORK.

FREEZE, HOODLUM!

THE BOSS ALWAYS SAYS "BE PREPARED." I MAKE FOR MY STASH.

COME OUT OF THERE WITH YOUR HANDS UP.

I DON'T HAVE TIME TO EXPLAIN ALL THIS TO THE POLICE. IT'S ALREADY PUSHING MIDNIGHT.

AT LEAST, THAT'S MY EXCUSE. TRUTH BE TOLD, *THIS IS A BLAST.*

BLAM

BLAM

SON OF A--

BESIDES, THIS IS *MY CASE.* I TRY TO PUT IT TOGETHER THE WAY THE BOSS TAUGHT ME, BUT THE PIECES DON'T FIT.

BUTCH MAY BE SMART ENOUGH TO STEAL EXPLOSIVES BUT HE'S NO CRIMINAL MASTERMIND. IS IT REALLY JUST A CASE OF SOME IDIOT KIDS BLOWING UP AN OLD TRANSMITTER FOR KICKS?

AND THEN THERE'S WALLY, THE VANISHING BLOWHARD.

FIVE MINUTES TO MIDNIGHT.

ALL'S QUIET WHEN I MAKE THE TRANSMITTER. BUTCH'S CAR IS OUT FRONT SO I TAKE THE LONG WAY IN.

I FIND BUTCH AND ADAM. SOMEONE'S ALREADY BEATEN ME TO THE PUNCH.

'BOUT TIME YOU GOT HERE, SLOWPOKE.

EASY THERE, SLICK. I'M ON ***YOUR*** SIDE. LET ME GUESS--YOU'RE THE CORVETTE KID, RIGHT?

AND YOU'RE WALLY WOOD, THE DISAPPEARING DIESELHEAD.

YOU'D BETTER NOT BE SCREWING UP MY CASE.

YOUR CASE? I'VE BEEN AFTER THESE GUYS SINCE THEY BLEW THROUGH CENTRAL CITY.

I GOT THEM TO SPILL. THEY SOLD THE TNT EARLIER TODAY TO SOME FOREIGN TYPES AT AN OLD AIRFIELD ABOUT FIVE MILES FROM HERE. I FIGURE THEY'RE LONG GONE.

NO--CRYSTAL MENTIONED "FIREWORKS AT MIDNIGHT."

THESE BONEHEADS HELD OUT ON YOU. OVER PAST THAT HILL IS THE AIRFIELD--THEY WERE HERE FOR ***THE VIEW.***

WE HAVE TO GET TO THAT AIRFIELD BEFORE MIDNIGHT.

I CAN SWING THAT.

JUST HOP ON YOUR BIKE AND LEAVE THE PEDDLING TO ME.

IT'S A WILD RIDE TO THE AIRFIELD. KID FLASH CALLS IT BACKDRAFTING. I CALL IT THE CAT'S ASS.

THE BOSS MAN TRAINED ME THAT KNOWLEDGE IS POWER. I SPEND A FEW SLEEPY HOURS EVERY WEEK MEMORIZING TRANSPORT SCHEDULES, SECURITY ROUTES, UPCOMING EVENTS, ADDRESSES AND EVEN NATIONAL SECURITY STUFF.

EEEEHAAAAAAAAA!

I DON'T KNOW WHERE HE GETS THIS INTEL, AND I DON'T ASK. THE POINT IS THIS OLD AIRFIELD IS A SLEEPER. IT'S A REFUELING SPOT FOR AIR FORCE ONE. I KNOW THE PRESIDENT IS IN THE AIR RIGHT NOW, EN ROUTE TO WASHINGTON.

KNOWLEDGE IS POWER. AND BOY, THIS KID IS SPEED.

WE'RE TOO LATE! HERE COMES THE PLANE.

RELAX. THERE'S TIME TO SPARE.

FIND THE BOMBS!

"FIND THE BOMBS"? WHAT IS HE GOING TO DO, TAKE A NAP?

I FIND THEM, ALL RIGHT. A TRIPWIRE ON THE RUNWAY. IF THEY TOUCH DOWN, ALL BETS ARE OFF.

NO SIGN OF KID FLASH, AND I'M OUT OF TIME.

I FIGURE MY ONLY OPTION IS TO TRIP THE CHARGE MYSELF BEFORE THEY LAND.

AND THAT'S WHEN SWIFTY FINALLY DOES SOMETHING SMART.

WHAT THE *HEY?*

I FOUND SOME FUEL AND WROTE THEM A LITTLE NOTE.

THEY *GOTTA* SEE THAT.

BY THE WAY, I TOOK A LITTLE TOUR--THE REAL GROUND CREW IS DEAD, AND A COUPLE OF ARMED GOONS ARE IN THE RADIO TOWER.

BLAM BLAM BLAM BLAM BLAM

YOU DON'T SAY.

WHAT IN BLAZES DOES THAT MEAN, SIR?

I, ER...AH... BELIEVE IT MEANS WE CAN'T LAND HERE. PULL HER UP.

CIRCUS

I'D LIKE TO SAY WITH ALL MODESTY THAT THE REST IS HISTORY.

HA! I BEAT YOU!

I LET YOU HAVE THAT ONE. FIGURED YOU DESERVED TO WIN SOMETHING TONIGHT.

WE BAGGED THE THIEVES, A RING OF COMMUNIST SABOTEURS, AND SAVED THE PRESIDENT ALL IN ONE NIGHT. THE BOSS WAS *MIGHTY* IMPRESSED. I SWEAR HE ALMOST CRACKED A SMILE.

I GUESS OLD SWIFTY ISN'T SO BAD. NEITHER ONE OF US HAD THE TOOLS TO SWING IT ALONE. BUT TOGETHER WE MADE A GREAT TEAM. WE EVEN GOT A THANK-YOU FROM THE MAN HIMSELF.

HE CALLED US "TEEN TITANS." KINDA CORNY, BUT I DIG IT.

To The TEEN TITANS John F. Kennedy

THE END

TRIPLE DYNAMITE FROM DC!

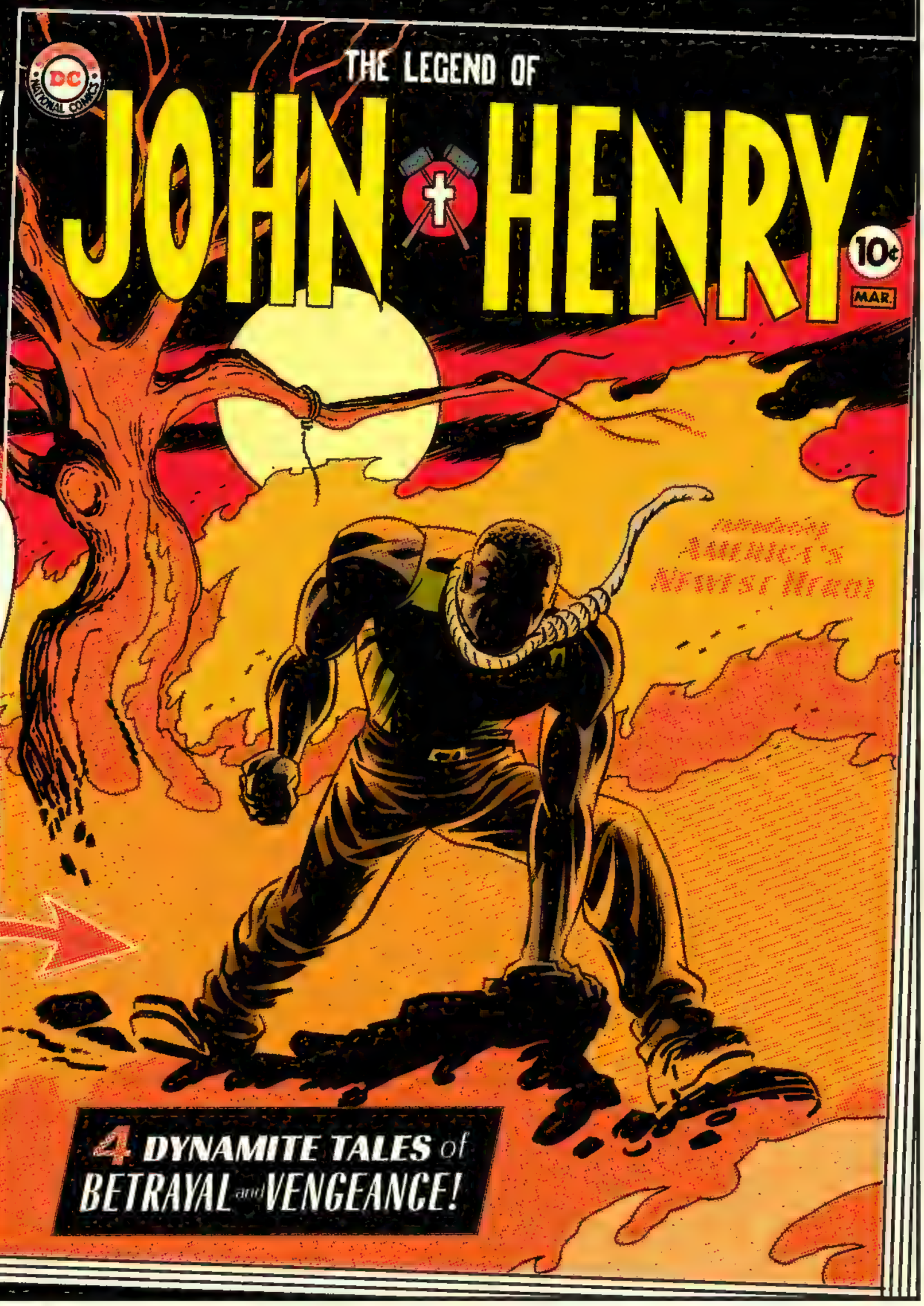
The BEGINNING— of a bold NEW DIRECTION!

The most STARTLING NEW CHARACTER of the year!

IS HE A HERO OR IS HE A KILLER?

YOU BE THE JUDGE WHEN YOU READ "THE STRANGE DEATH OF JOHN HENRY!"

SUPERMAN DC NATIONAL COMICS



For The VERY BEST

SUPERMAN DC NATIONAL COMICS

in COMICS READING

IT'S 1962 AND BEING POLITICALLY CORRECT MEANS YOU'RE A DEMOCRAT. SHE'S A WOMAN OF DISTINGUISHED ENDEAVORS, BUT THIS TIME THE AMAZON PRINCESS OUTDOES HERSELF. JOIN US AS OUR RAVEN-HAIRED WARRIOR BECOMES **"THE MOTHER OF THE MOVEMENT!"**

Wonder Woman AND BLACK CANARY

JEEZ, DIANA, ***RELAX.*** MAYBE YOU SHOULD GET A MASSAGE OR SOMETHING.

YOU'LL FEEL THAT IN THE MORNING, YOU DOG!

POUND!

HONESTLY, WHAT'S YOUR PROBLEM?

KRUNCH

MY PROBLEM IS THESE ***TWO-LEGGED PIGS*** THEY CALL MEN!

LOOK AT THEM. FIVE MINUTES AGO THEY WERE LAUGHING AT THE THOUGHT OF TWO WOMEN TRYING TO STOP THEM.

EVERY TIME THEY OPEN THEIR COWARDLY MOUTHS, THEY SAY SOMETHING MEANT TO SUBJUGATE US.

PLEASE-- MY KIDNEYS...

SNIFF

WHAT A SOCIETY. WOMEN ***SUBJUGATED*** AS HOMESLAVES WHILE THESE HAIRY BRUTES RUN AMOK.

AND IT'S NOT JUST THE VILLAINS. POLITICIANS, POLICE, JOURNALISTS TOO! AN ***UNHOLY CABAL*** MEANT TO KEEP OUR GENDER OPPRESSED.

HERE WE GO AGAIN.

EVEN THE MAGAZINES! LOOK AT THIS THING.

HERA HELP US.

A TRULY BOVINE DISPLAY.

HUH. I THINK I WENT TO MIDDLE SCHOOL WITH HER.

WILL YOU LOOK AT THE HUMILIATION THESE WOMEN ENDURE-- FORCED TO SERVE MEN IN CLUBS DRESSED UP LIKE RABBITS.

YEAH, UH...RABBITS. THOSE CLUBS ARE ALL THE RAGE ACROSS THE COUNTRY.

THERE'S ONE OPENING IN GOTHAM CITY NEXT WEEK.

HERE'S A CHANCE TO STRIKE A ***REAL BLOW*** FOR EQUALITY. I WILL GO THERE AND WIN OVER THESE MISGUIDED MEN WITH A MESSAGE OF AMAZONIAN LOVE.

AND IF THAT DOESN'T WORK?

--MERCY, PLEASE--

I WILL BEAT THEM UNTIL THEY CRY FOR THEIR SAINTED MOTHERS.

OY.

I'D BETTER TAG ALONG.

SWAT!

MERCURY'S CODPIECE!

THIS PLACE IS EVEN SLEAZIER THAN I THOUGHT.

AND WHY IN HEAVEN ARE YOU WEARING YOUR COSTUME? I THOUGHT THE IDEA WAS TO BLEND IN?

HA!

TAKE A LOOK AROUND. I'M NOT THE ONE WITH A BLENDING PROBLEM.

IT'S LIKE A WHO'S WHO OF DEGENERATES IN HERE--*HERA'S GIRDLE!*

WHAT NOW?

--JUST HAPPY YOU COULD MAKE IT.

ARE YOU *MAD?* I WOULDN'T MISS THIS CHICKFEST FOR--

BRUCE WAYNE!

WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?

DIANA! DINAH! I'M UH... I'M TRAILING A VILLAIN!

IMAGINE! THE CAD SNUCK INTO THIS HORRIBLE PLACE. NO CHOICE BUT TO FOLLOW HIM.

JUSTICE, AND ALL THAT, RIGHT?

WHOOPS! THERE HE GOES. I'D BETTER GET AFTER HIM.

G'NIGHT, LADIES!

WHAT A WORLD WE LIVE IN. EVEN THE GOOD GUYS ARE DOGS.

GOOD EVENING, CATS AND KITTENS.

THE MINGUS TRIO WILL BE BACK FOR ANOTHER SET SOON, BUT IN THE MEANTIME I WANTED TO THANK YOU ALL FOR MAKING TONIGHT'S OPENING SUCH A SCENE.

I COOKED UP A SWINGIN' LITTLE CAKE TO HELP US CELEBRATE.

BUT THIS ISN'T ANY ORDINARY CAKE. THIS CRAZY PASTRY HAS A SECRET INGREDIENT--

HOLLYWOOD SEXBOMB ***JAYNE MANSFIELD!***

THIS HAS GONE FAR ENOUGH. C'MON!

--MY BABY JUST CARES FOR ME--

YIIII!

TAKE A HIKE, HUSSY!

NOW TO DELIVER THESE MEN A MESSAGE OF LOVE AND EQUALITY.

SHOULD BE INTERESTING.

WHOO HOO HOO JAYNE JAYNE WOOT JAYNE

JAYN-HUH?

MEN OF AMERICA, *FOR SHAME.*

I'VE COME HERE TO TALK WITH YOU ABOUT THE OPPRESSIVE YOKE OF OBJECTIFICATION AND THE HEALING POWER OF EQUALITY.

WHAT TH'?

TOGETHER WE CAN MAKE A BETTER DAY, WHERE WOMEN ARE TREATED WITH RESPECT AND JUDGED BY THE BEAUTY OF THEIR SOULS AS WELL AS THEIR BODIES.

THOSE WHO WOULD JOIN ME, *RAISE YOUR GLASSES!*

NOT EXACTLY WHAT I HAD IN MIND.

GET OFF THE STAGE!

WELL, THE LOVE NUMBER DIDN'T SWING.

SO, NOW WITH THE BEATING?

HOLA, DOGS!

IT'S FOR THEIR OWN GOOD.

SWOP!

FIGHT!

FRACTURE!

S-STAY BACK, YOU SHE DEVIL! IT'S TIME YOU REALIZED THAT IT'S A ***MAN'S WORLD.***

IT TICKLES.

FWOOM

LET THIS BURNING BREASTPLATE SERVE NOTICE OF YOUR VILLAINY--

KLANG!

AND BEAR WITNESS TO YOUR ***DESTRUCTION!***

EVEN IN DEFEAT THESE SWINE SMILE AND SLOBBER.

MAYBE YOU SHOULD PUT YOUR TOP BACK ON.

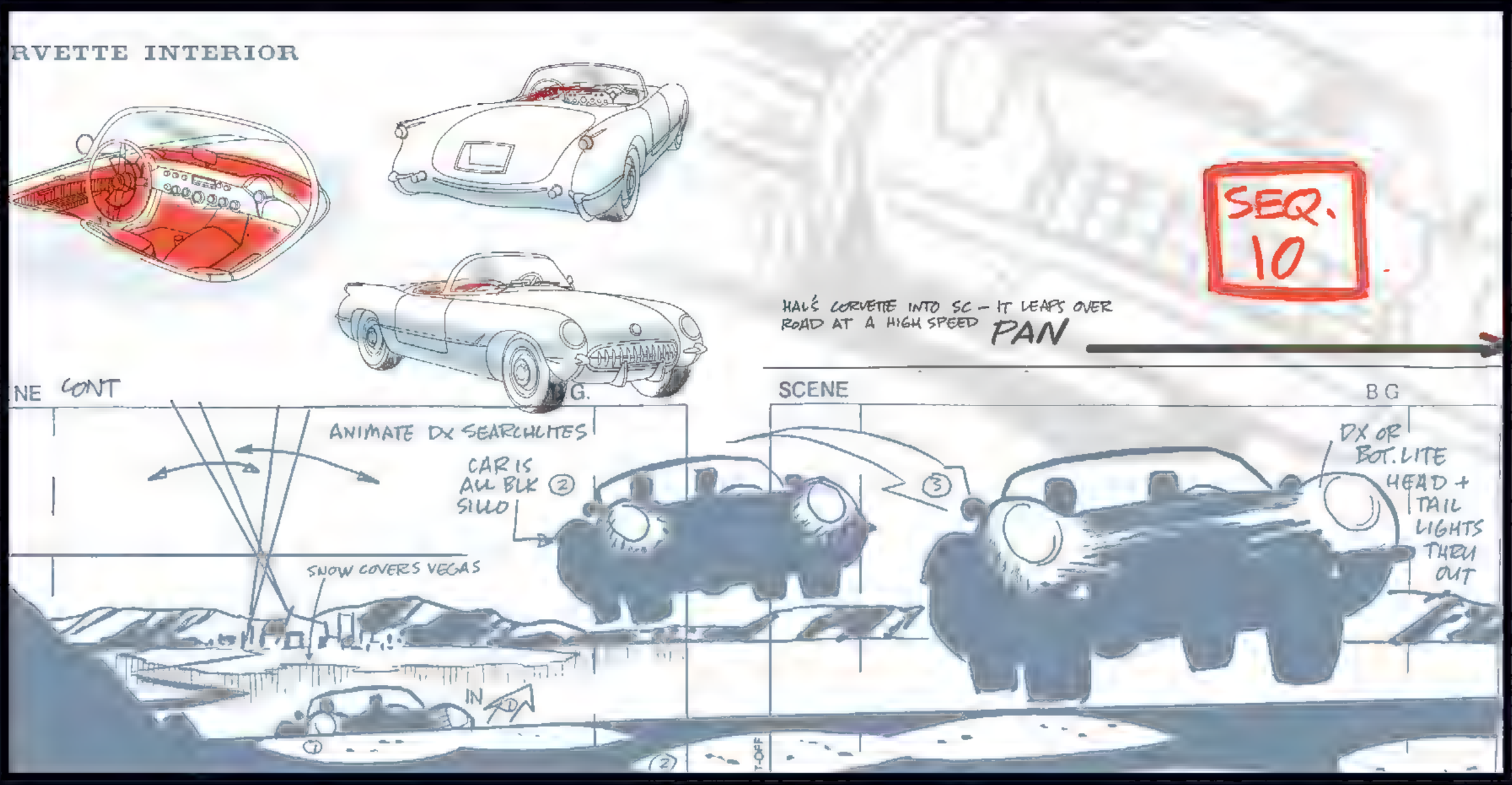
OUR SISTERS ARE INSPIRED. WE'VE STRUCK A ***MIGHTY BLOW*** FOR WOMEN'S RIGHTS THIS FINE NIGHT.

YOU REALIZE ALL THE PRESS HERE ARE MEN, AND YOU'VE BEATEN THEM STUPID. I DON'T THINK WE'LL BE READING ABOUT THIS ANY TIME SOON.

WHATCHA WRITIN' THERE, GLORIA?

END

SPECIAL SECTION
The Art of
JUSTICE LEAGUE: THE NEW FRONTIER


RVETTE INTERIOR
SEQ. 10
HAL'S CORVETTE INTO SC – IT LEAPS OVER ROAD AT A HIGH SPEED
PAN
NE CONT
G.
SCENE
B G
ANIMATE DX SEARCHLITES
CAR IS ALL BLK SILLO
SNOW COVERS VEGAS
DX OR BOT. LITE
HEAD + TAIL LIGHTS THRU OUT
IN
T-OFF

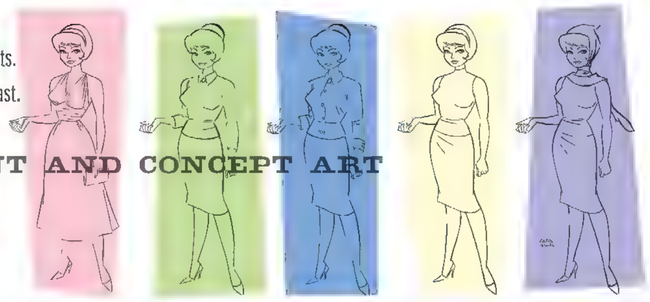
THE ART OF JLNF
Design

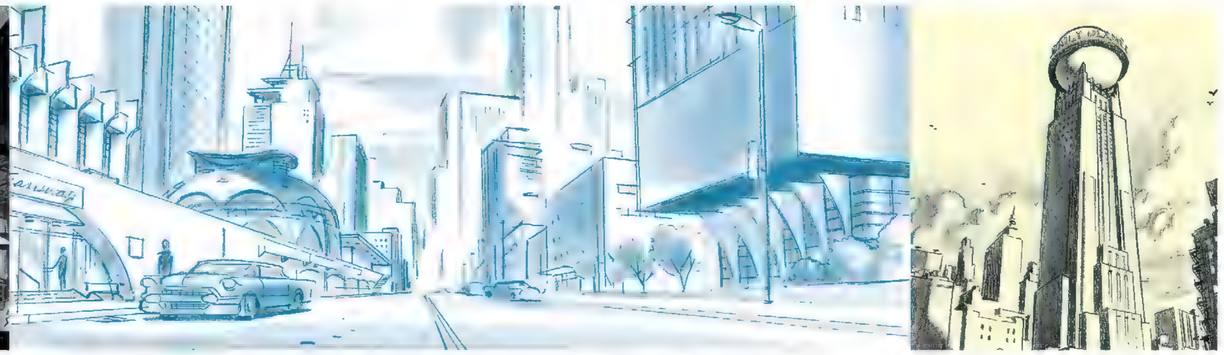
"THERE SIMPLY ISN'T ROOM HERE TO COVER EVEN A FRACTION OF THE MAGNIFICENT ARTWORK GENERATED BY THE DOZENS OF TALENTED PEOPLE WHO LENT THEIR SKILLS TO JLNF. PERHAPS IN THE FUTURE WE CAN OFFER YOU A MORE COMPLETE LOOK BUT FOR NOW, ENJOY THIS PEEK AT THE ARTWORK BEHIND THE ANIMATED FILM."

DARWYN COOKE

Once we had a script I began to create attitude drawings of our characters to assist the board artists. With J. Bone and Glenn Wong, I began the rough design of our cast. Concurrently Paul Rivoche began visualizing the cities our heroes would live in. In the vehicle and prop department, Norm Ryang and Ron Catiggay had the daunting task of designing everything from a Buick to a Sabre jet to Barry Allen's telephone.

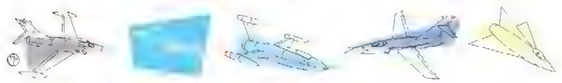
DEVELOPMENT AND CONCEPT ART





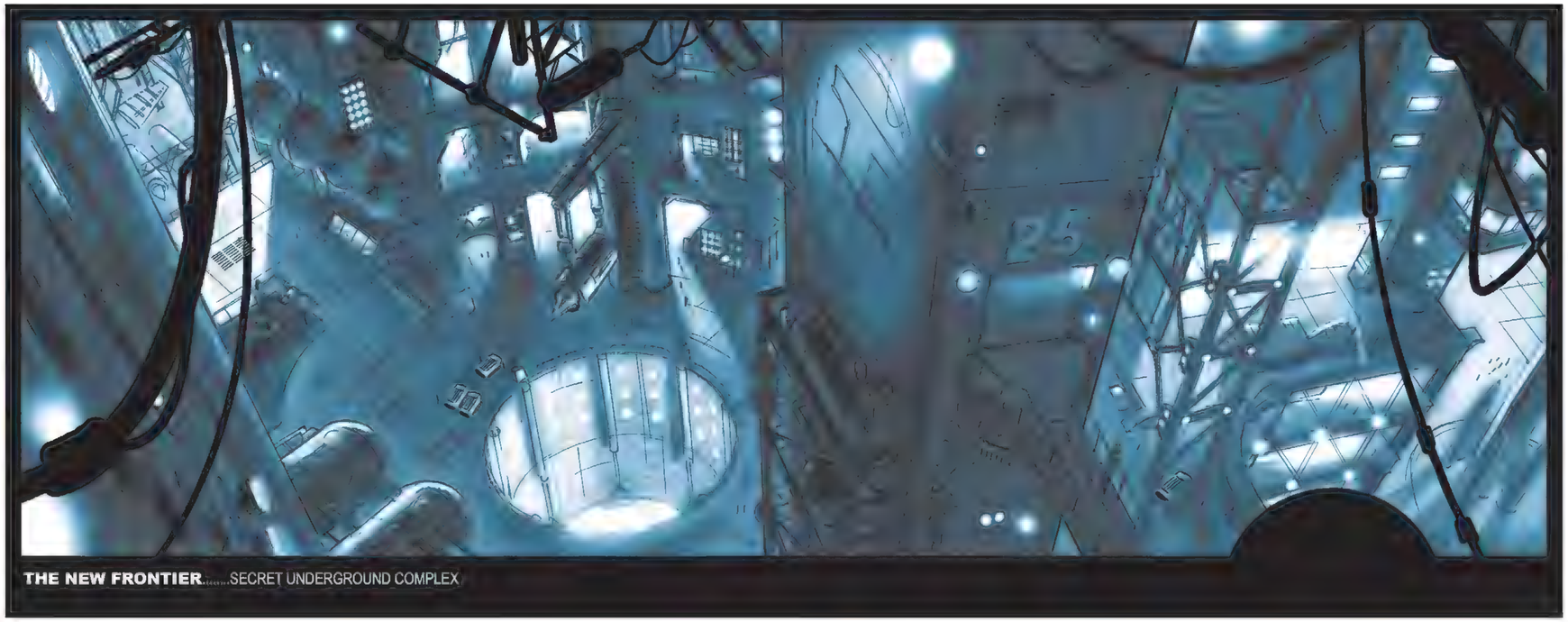
THE ART OF JLNF

Design

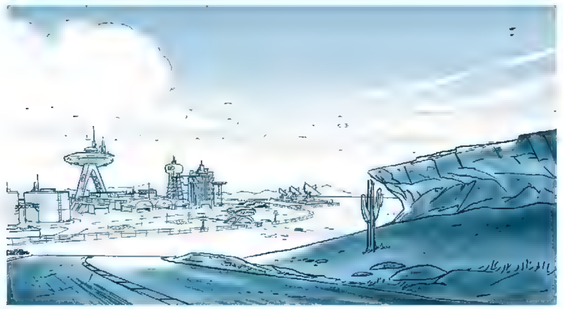


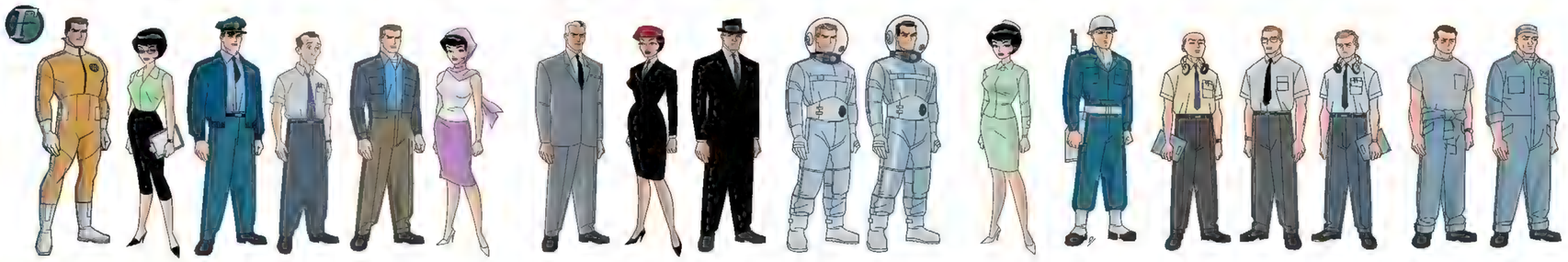
"THE CHALLENGE: CAPTURE THE SPIRIT OF THE ERA. THIS MEANT STUDYING '50s ERA SOURCE MATERIAL, ABSORBING THOSE INFLUENCES AND DISTILLING THE ESSENCE OF THE DESIGN STYLES OF THE TIME TO ARRIVE AT DESIGNS WHICH 'PLUSSED' THE STORYBOARD/STORYTELLING. WE HAD A BATCAVE WITH CIRCULAR COMPUTER SCREENS, A SECRET COMPLEX LADEN WITH ROCKETS AND RIVETS... ENJOYABLE STUFF TO DRAW!"

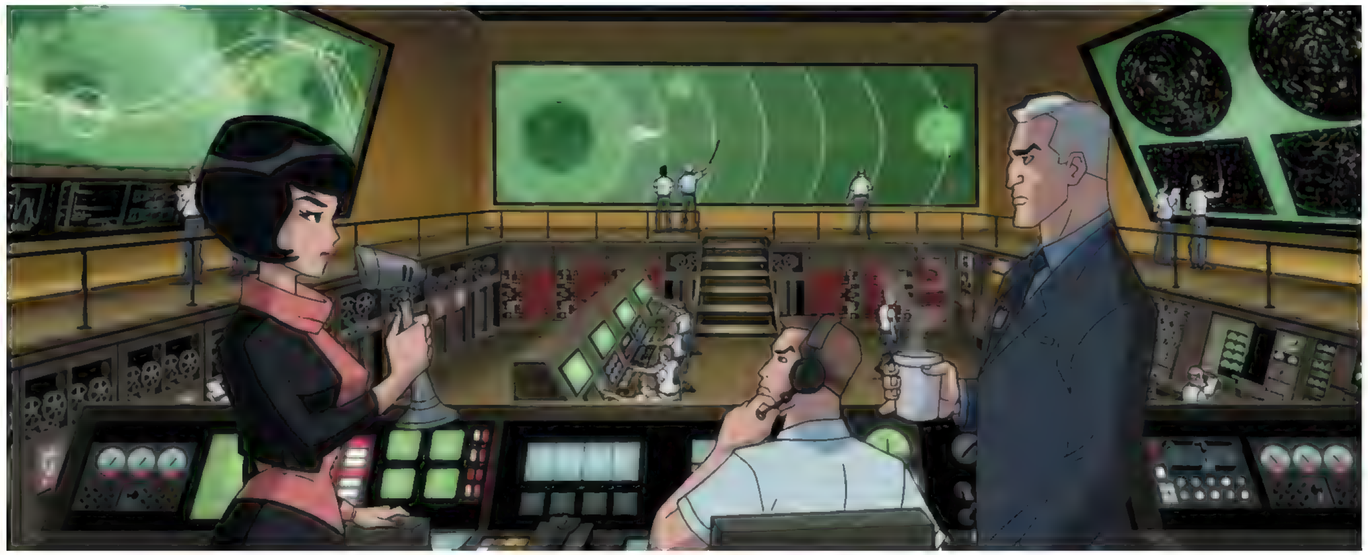
LEAD DESIGNER **PAUL RIVOCHE**



THE NEW FRONTIER.....SECRET UNDERGROUND COMPLEX

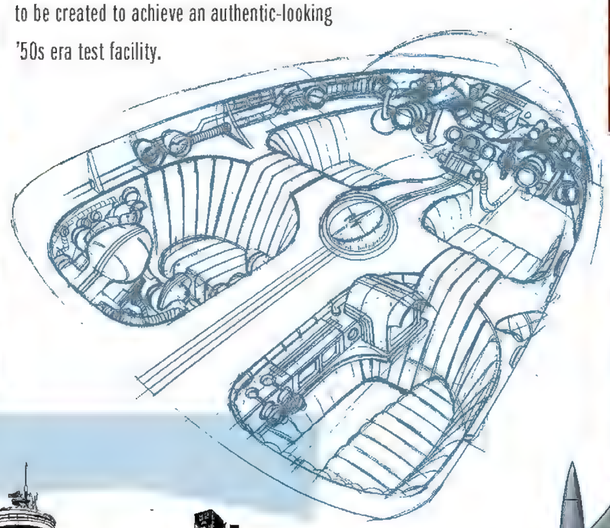


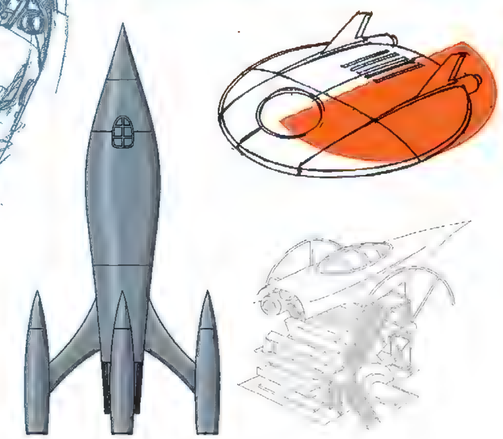


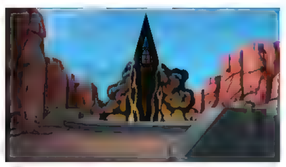


FERRIS AIRCRAFT

With conceptual work out of the way, the crews worked in tandem to begin the process of final design. Here is a look at just one environment and the immense number of characters, vehicles and sets that had to be created to achieve an authentic-looking '50s era test facility.







Storyboard

"IT WAS ALL ABOUT EXPLOSIVE BOLTS. THAT, AND RECRUITING WHAT BECAME THE STRONGEST BOARD CREW ONE OF THESE DTVS HAS EVER HAD. AFTER BREAKING THE SCRIPT INTO TIGHT SEQUENCES I, 'CAST' THE PROPER TALENT TOWARDS THEIR STRENGTH. YOU GET THE ARTIST'S BEST EFFORT AND YOU CAN HAVE FUN WITH IT. "

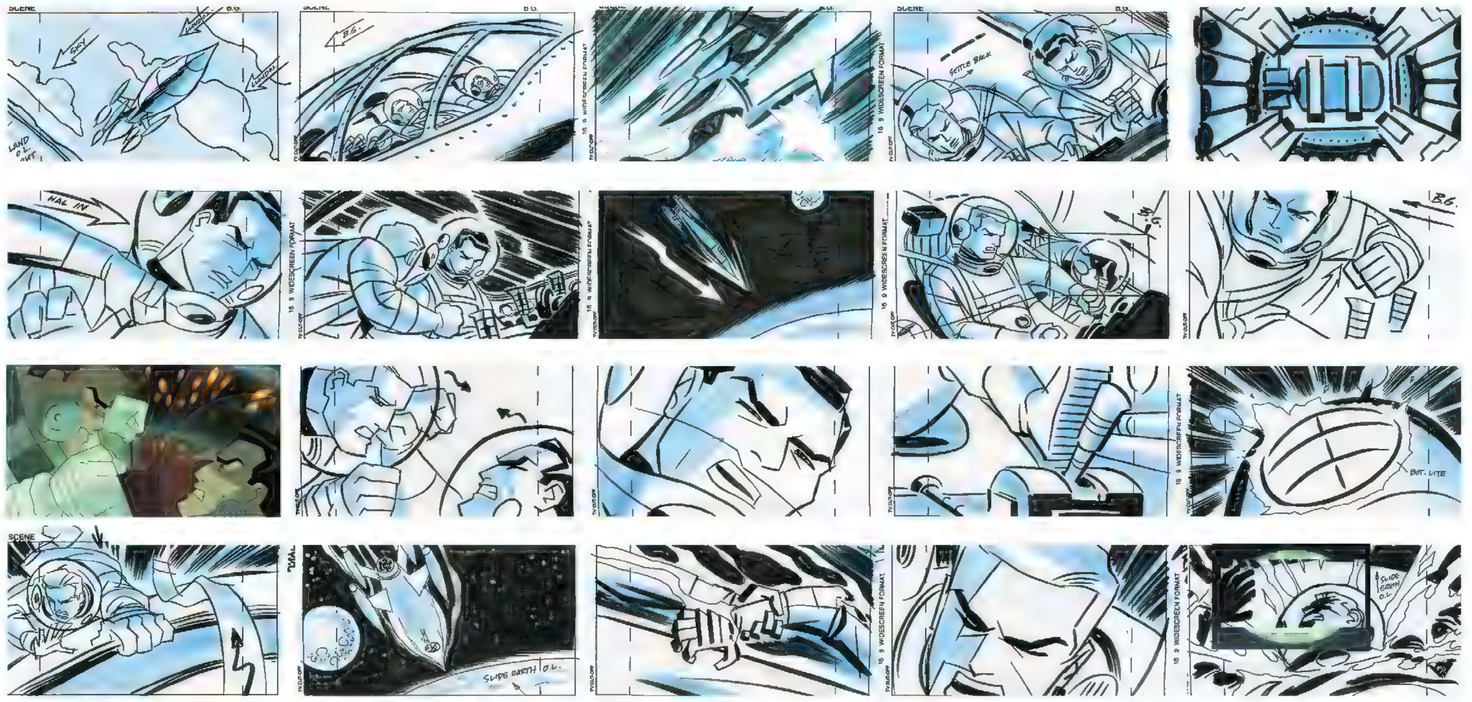
DIRECTOR **DAVID BULLOCK**

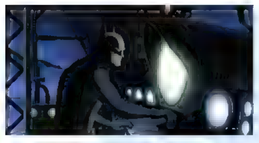
THE STORYBOARD AS GRAPHIC ART
The exceptional board artist not only creates a piece of engaging film but also a work of art all its own.
Left is Sequence 3: Heart of Darkness boarded by Butch Lukic.

SEQUENCE 3 LOIS

Abridging such a large story led to two scenes that aren't in the book. Above is Sequence 3: Lois, boarded by David Bullock.
Below is Sequence 8: The Flying Cloud, boarded by Darwyn Cooke. Note how closely the final screen caps follow the storyboard.

SEQUENCE 8 THE FLYING CLOUD





UNFORGOTTEN HEROES

At the script stage, several story elements and characters were removed due to budget restraints. Clever direction and board work allowed us to reinsert many of these characters without speaking parts. It's a testament to their dedication that the end result is so seamless. Special kudos to designer Glenn Wong and storyboard artist Adam Van Wyck for service above and beyond the call of duty.

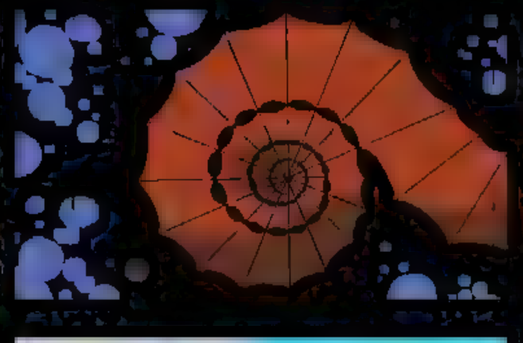
WARNERS ANIMA

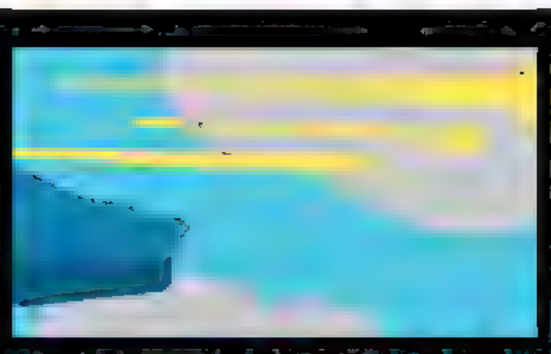
PRESENTS

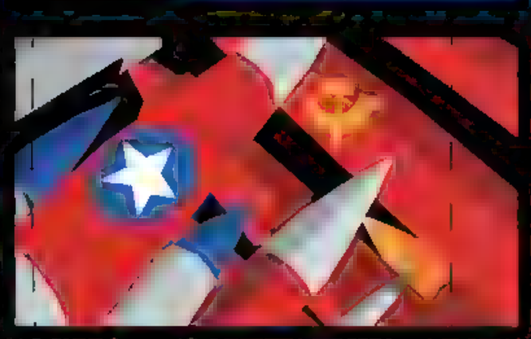
THE ART OF JLNF

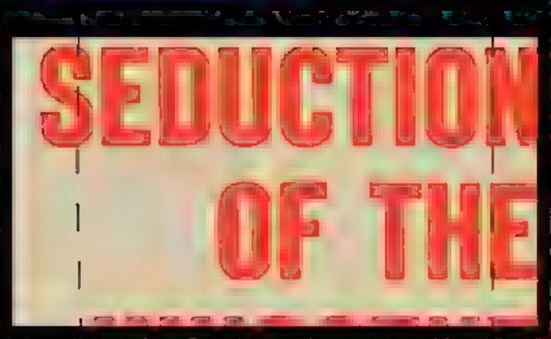
MAIN TITLES

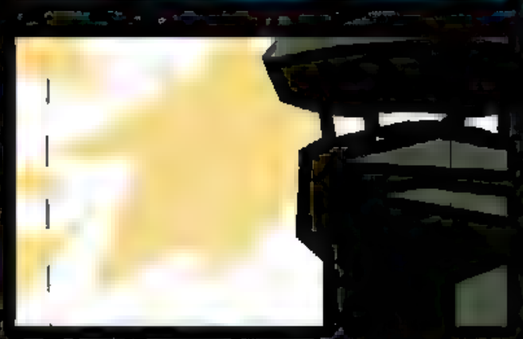
A montage of director Bullock's Saul Bass-inspired storyboards for the film's opening credits.

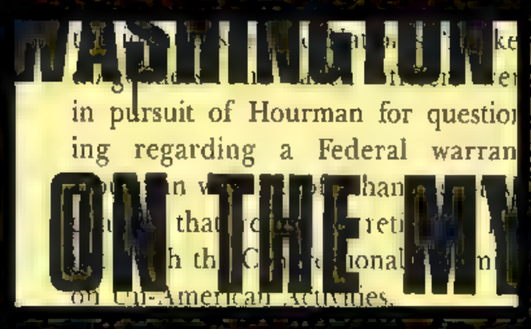


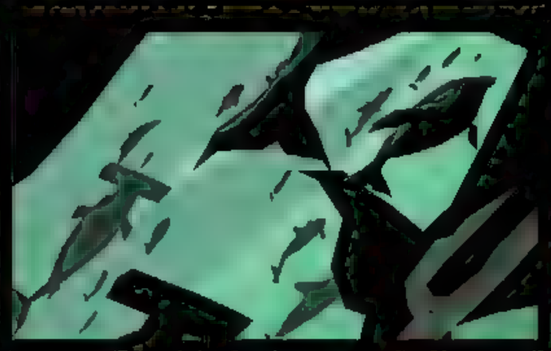


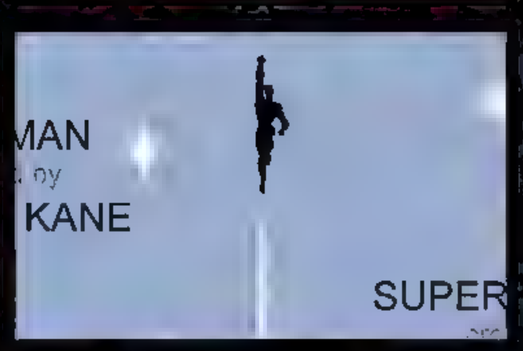


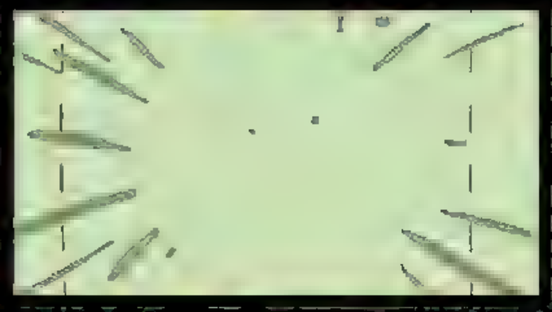


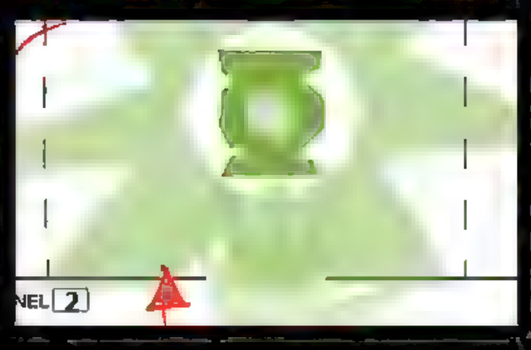












DARWYN COOKE

was an Eisner Award-winning cartoonist and animator who spent several years as a magazine art director and graphic designer before switching careers to work in animation, where he contributed to such shows as *Batman: The Animated Series*, *Superman: The Animated Series* and *Men in Black: The Series*. Following these successes, Cooke was approached by DC Comics to write and illustrate a project that he had submitted to the company years earlier: BATMAN: EGO. The critical success of this graphic novel led to more freelance work, including a relaunch of the CATWOMAN series with writer Ed Brubaker (which inspired Cooke to write and draw the graphic novel CATWOMAN: SELINA'S BIG SCORE), as well as assignments on *X-Force* and *Spider-Man's Tangled Web* for Marvel.

Cooke then spent several years crafting the ambitious epic THE NEW FRONTIER, a six-issue miniseries bridging the gap between the end of the Golden Age of comics and the beginning of the Silver Age. Following this milestone, he illustrated and wrote (with friends) a highly acclaimed issue of DC's artist-centric series SOLO, created a new incarnation of THE SPIRIT and drew five graphic novel adaptations of Richard Stark's hugely popular Parker crime novels. Cooke was also one of the essential voices behind BEFORE WATCHMEN, one of the most-talked-about comics events of the decade. In 2016 he completed his final narrative work: the Vertigo miniseries THE TWILIGHT CHILDREN, written by Gilbert Hernandez. Darwyn Cooke passed away on May 14, 2016.

DAVE STEWART

began his career as an intern at Dark Horse, and then he quickly moved to coloring comics. An artist in his own right, Stewart's stunning and versatile work has made him one of the industry's most sought-after color stylists. His credits include BATMAN, SUPERMAN, BATMAN/SPIRIT, *Conan*, *B.P.R.D.* and *Hellboy*. His industry awards include two Eisners and two Harveys. He currently resides in Portland, Oregon, with his wife Michelle and their dog Spike.

JARED K. FLETCHER

grew up sailing around the waters of his native Rhode Island. After graduating from the Kubert School in 2003 he began working at DC Comics as part of their new in-house lettering department. In 2007 he left DC to pursue his freelance career as the proprietor of Studio Fantabulous. He spends long days there designing logos and type treatments, art-directing covers, cartooning, designing T-shirts and lettering comic books like BATMAN, EX MACHINA, THE SPIRIT, WONDER WOMAN and *Spider-Man*.

J. BONE

is an Eisner Award-nominated cartoonist, illustrator and animation designer. His credits include GOTHAM GIRLS for DC, *X-Force* and *Spider-Man* for Marvel and *Alison Dare* and *Jingle Belle* for Oni. He also worked on THE SPIRIT with Darwyn Cooke and *The Rocketeer: Hollywood Horror* with Roger Langridge. J. calls Toronto home and lives with his guy Kimball and their dog Hugo.

DAVID BULLOCK

has served as a director and/or story artist on many animated movies and TV shows, including *Batman Beyond*, *Kim Possible*, *Teen Titans and Star Wars: The Clone Wars*. His awesome comics work can be seen in SUPERMAN, BLOODSHOT, the "Deadman" feature in WEDNESDAY COMICS and his own creation, *King Ronok*.

MICHAEL CHO

is a Canadian cartoonist, painter and illustrator whose work evokes the grandeur and flourish of classic Golden and Silver Age comics. His work has been published in, among other publications, *The New York Times Book Review*, *The Boston Globe*, *The Village Voice*, *The Washington Post* and *Scientific American*. A master of "lost line" illustration, Cho has also created and self-published several independent and web comics, including the innovative and consistently breathtaking *Papercut*.

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Me and Mom, circa '62

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